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Piano prodigy

DODEA student goes from third grade to Carnegie Hall with a little help from YouTube

Watch a video of Hayden playing at [stripes.com/go/prodigy](#)



By CARLOS M. VAZQUEZ II
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa

A 9-year-old piano prodigy on Okinawa has already wowed an audience at New York's Carnegie Hall, despite spending only two years seriously studying the instrument.

From memory, he can play music composed by Johann Sebastian Bach, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Felix Mendelssohn and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach.

Not bad for a third-grader.

Hayden Lee recently showed off his talents for parents and students at his school, Zukeran Elementary, and Kubasaki High School, both under the Department of Defense Education Activity at Camp Foster. He received standing ovations.

"To me, I think that the keys ... are like shapes and colors," he told Stars and Stripes on June 12.

Hayden and his parents, Naomi and Stephan Lee, a civilian working for Navy Federal Credit Union, recently moved from Hawaii to Japan's southern island prefecture. Hayden's parents have backgrounds in math and science, but neither had musical inclinations, they said.

Hayden's musical journey started at age 3, when his parents enrolled him in piano lessons at the University of Hawaii. His tutelage did not last long due to his inability to stay still at such a young age, Naomi Lee said.

At 6, Hayden became reinspired to learn piano after watching an older cousin playing a keyboard, his mother said.

SEE PIANO ON PAGE 5

Hayden Lee, 9, performs at Kubasaki High School on June 12.

CARLOS M. VAZQUEZ II/Stars and Stripes

Army reviewing air conditioning policies in Germany as temperatures soar

By JOHN VANDIVER AND MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The military in Germany is sweeter than ever as record high temperatures bake base offices and homes, most of which are without air conditioning even as summer scorches become more frequent.

But there is potentially good news for the Army in Europe. Officials are looking at recent weather trends to see if policies that limit the use of air

■ Sizzling air from Sahara brings record heat wave to Europe
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conditioning need to be modified.

"Validated historical weather data is being reviewed and analyzed to determine the impact of recent weather trends on existing policies," said Ray Johnson, Installation Management Command-Europe spokesman.

The reason air conditioning isn't everywhere on garrisons is twofold: a desire to save energy costs and a view that the temperatures in Germany are not extreme in the summer.

"Based on historical ambient weather data, air

conditioning is generally not considered appropriate for climate conditioning for U.S. installations in Europe, with the exception of Italy," IMCOM-Europe's current policy states.

Recent data reveals a warming trend.

From 2014 through this month, there were 98 days above 86 degrees in Kaiserslautern, the city that about 50,000 military Defense Department personnel and family members live in or near.

SEE AIR ON PAGE 7

MILITARY

Navy: SEAL trial witness may face perjury charge

By Andrew Dyer

The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO — A San Diego-based Navy SEAL who testified in a murder trial last week that he — not the defendant — killed a wounded Islamic State fighter was told he could face perjury charges related to that testimony, according to an email from a Navy attorney.

The news, first reported by The New York Times, is the latest disruption in the prosecution of Navy SEAL Chief Edward R. Gallagher, whose case is being tried at Naval Base San Diego. Gallagher, 40, is charged with killing a wounded teenage ISIS fighter he was treating in Iraq during a 2017 deployment. He's also charged with shooting civilians and, on other occasions, firing indiscriminately at other noncombatants.

Gallagher denies all the charges and has pleaded not guilty. In an email obtained by The San Diego Union-Tribune, Navy Capt. Don King, the staff attorney for the Navy admiral overseeing the court-martial, told Petty Officer Corey Scott's attorney that Scott was subject to prosecution for perjury.

Scott, a medic who deployed with Gallagher and SEAL Team 7's Alpha Platoon in 2017, testified last week that he and Gallagher were treating the teenage fighter who appeared to be suffering from "blast lung." Part of

the treatment involves making an incision just below the Adam's apple and inserting a breathing tube.

Scott testified that he saw Gallagher stab the fighter once with his knife. Then Scott stunned the court by saying, when asked about how the fighter died, that he, Scott, covered the man's breathing tube with his thumb until the fighter suffocated.

In the Navy's email to Scott's lawyer, King says Scott "testified directly contrary to previous official statements — thus exposing him to prosecution."

Cmdr. Tamara Lawrence, a spokeswoman for Naval Special Warfare in San Diego, said Wednesday the Navy has yet to decide if it will charge Scott.

"SO1 Scott was granted administrative immunity in exchange for a promise of truthful testimony," Lawrence said in an email. "We are reviewing his testimony in light of his previous statements and no decisions have been [made]."

Gallagher's lead civilian defense attorney, Timothy Parlatore, said Wednesday the Navy's threatened charges were "pure vindictiveness."

"They're trying to save face and blame Corey Scott for their failures," Parlatore told the Union-Tribune. "They never properly investigated this case."

Scott testified under a sweeping immunity grant from the Navy

and the Justice Department. If Scott is found to have committed perjury, those immunity arrangements go away and Scott could be subject to further prosecution.

The judge in the court-martial, Navy Capt. Aaron Rugh, said early Wednesday that he has been clear that testimony provided by witnesses with immunity can't be used for charges other than perjury that occurred in court.

Navy prosecutor Lt. Scott McDonald accused Scott of lying on the witness stand, saying that in multiple prior interviews with prosecutors and NCIS, Scott never said the fighter died by suffocation.

Wednesday was the first day of the defense's case in Gallagher's court-martial. The defense called two Marines who worked with Gallagher's platoon in Iraq; both testified they had not received reports of war crimes at the time.

One, Gunner Sgt. Joshua Vanderpool, said several SEALs complained about Gallagher's leadership and aggressiveness. Vanderpool said Gallagher had issues with some of his men too.

"You could tell he was frustrated with his guys," Vanderpool said.

Two SEALs from the platoon also testified for the defense.

Master Chief Brian Alazzawi said he had spent a week with Gallagher, including time in the sniper tower where prosecutors say Gallagher shot civilians. Ala-



JULIE WATSON/AP

Navy Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher arrives at military court on Naval Base San Diego with his wife, Andrea, on Wednesday.

zawi said he never saw Gallagher do that.

Petty Officer 1st Class Joshua Graffam also testified he had been with Gallagher several times in the tower, serving as his spotter. He said he never saw the chief shoot civilians but he saw Gallagher shoot an unarmed man dressed in black who he said was moving "tactically" between structures.

Parlatore told the Union-Tribune that shooting was an example of a "good shoot." Gallagher's criminal charges do not mention that shooting.

Some of the SEALs' testimony appeared to confirm parts of the prosecution's case.

Defense attorneys and Gallagher's family have said repeatedly in interviews that Gallagher's teammates waited "months" or "a year" before reporting their chief for war crimes. They said that stories about Gallagher shooting civilians from the sniper tower were "made up" months later by

SEALs planning a "mutiny."

However, Graffam testified that on the same day he saw the man in black get shot, another witness, Petty Officer 1st Class Dylan Dille, told him he had seen a civilian wearing white get shot and Gallagher said something over the radio: "You guys missed but I got him."

Graffam testified he did not see that.

Also Alazzawi testified that Chief Craig Miller told him about the stabbing in October 2017, a month after he came back from Iraq.

Alazzawi testified that he could tell that September that something was wrong. When Miller told him about the stabbing, Alazzawi said he told Miller to report it to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

Alazzawi testified that Miller said he didn't want Gallagher arrested; he just wanted to make sure he wouldn't lead troops in combat again.

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MILITARY

Esper prods allies to help in Persian Gulf

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Acting Defense Secretary Mark Esper urged NATO allies Thursday to create a new naval security mission to safeguard ships transiting the increasingly volatile Persian Gulf following accusations that Iran has been behind multiple attacks on commercial shipping in the area.

Esper, who was in Brussels for talks with NATO defense ministers after less than one week on the job as Pentagon chief, said he plans to return to alliance headquarters next month to give members a detailed brief on the threat Iran poses.

"The purpose here is to avoid war with Iran," Esper said.

Iran was not on the agenda of the talks in Brussels but became a focal issue for Washington, which wants alliance members to play a larger role in denouncing Iranian attacks.

Esper blamed Iran for attacks on six ships in the Gulf as well as downing a U.S. drone flying in international airspace. Allies need to "voice their opposition to Iran's bad behavior," Esper said.

Tehran has denied it was responsible for the attacks on the oil tankers and maintains the drone had intruded into its airspace



Courtesy of the Department of Defense

Acting Defense Secretary Mark Esper, center, attends the NATO defense ministers meeting in Brussels, Belgium, on Thursday.

when it was shot down by a surface-to-air missile.

In a message to Tehran, Esper said: "We are ready to defend our forces and interests in the region. No one should mistake restraint for weakness."

While the plan is still in the early stages, Esper said he wants a group of "like-minded" countries to develop a mission focused on maintaining freedom of navigation around the Strait of Hormuz, the world's busiest chokepoint for oil shipments.

The mission could include more

air surveillance and a picket line of warships that serve as escorts for commercial vessels, Esper said.

"Most partners in the room acknowledged the challenges we face," Esper said after discussions with his fellow defense chiefs.

He also reiterated the importance of increasing defense spending, a top Trump administration NATO priority.

"Adequate funding underpins everything we do and much more needs to be done," Esper said.

NATO members have steadily

boosted military expenditures over the past five years, but most allies still fall short of targets that call for 2% of gross domestic product to be spent on defense by a 2024 deadline. This year, eight of 29 members are expected to hit the target, up from just three in 2014.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said most members will meet the spending benchmark by the deadline. However, Germany still is not on track to meet the mark, which has been a point of contention between

Washington and Berlin.

"I count on all allies to step up their efforts even more. This is about our shared security in a more unpredictable world," Stoltenberg said at the end of talks Thursday.

In Brussels, participants also agreed to take steps to strengthen allied defenses if Russia does not come back into compliance with the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty by an Aug. 2 deadline.

Last year, the United States warned it would pull out of the pact if Moscow doesn't dismantle a new missile system that Washington says violates a ban on missiles with a range between 310 and 3,400 miles. Russian officials deny that the missile in question has a range greater than 310 miles.

Esper said the U.S. must consider new steps and will begin research on ground-based, non-nuclear, intermediate range missiles as one possible way to counter Russia.

"The United States has upheld its end of the deal; Russia has not," Esper said. "This is a dangerous and entirely avoidable reality, but Russia chose it."

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Green Beret, EOD tech killed in firefight

By PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
AND COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

A 32-year-old Green Beret and a 24-year-old explosive ordnance disposal soldier were killed Tuesday in a close-quarters firefight with Taliban insurgents in southern Afghanistan, Pentagon officials said.

Special Forces Master Sgt. Michael B. Riley and EOD technician Sgt. James G. Johnston were killed by small-arms fire in Uruzgan province, according to a Pentagon statement issued Thursday. They were working alongside Afghan forces when the firefight broke out, said a defense official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The official declined Thursday to provide additional details about the operation.

The firefight was under investigation, according to the Pentagon statement.

Riley, of Heilbronn, Germany, was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group at Fort Carson in Colorado. Johnston, of Trumansburg, N.Y., was assigned to the 79th Ordnance Battalion, 71st Ordnance Group at Fort Hood, Texas.

Johnston entered active-duty military service in July 2013 as an explosive ordnance disposal specialist and deployed to Afghanistan in March.

He and his wife of more than three years, Krista Johnston,

were expecting a baby girl, according to public Facebook posts. Posting photos of her fallen husband in recent days, Krista Johnston encouraged friends and family members to wear Hawaiian shirts on Friday in his honor.

She wrote she was traveling

Thursday with Johnston's parents to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, where his remains were scheduled to arrive.

"My heart and everything else is hurting and I don't really have the ability to keep putting words together, but I thank all of you so much for the kind words and support," she wrote Thursday morning on Facebook. "I love you husband, forever and always you better watch over me and our baby girl."

Johnston's battalion commander described him as "the epitome of what soldiers all aspire to be."

"Intelligent, trained, always ready," Lt. Col. Stacy M. Eneyeart, commander of the 9th Ordnance Battalion, wrote in a prepared statement. "We will honor his service and his sacrifice to this nation as we continue to protect others from explosive hazards

around the world."

Johnston's awards and decorations included a Bronze Star Medal, a Purple Heart, an Army Commendation Medal and the Combat Action Badge, according to the Army.

Riley, who was on his sixth deployment to Afghanistan, was a seasoned and experienced soldier who will always be honored and remembered, 10th Special Forces Group commander Col. Lawrence G. Ferguson said in a statement from U.S. Army Special Operations Command.

"It is with a heavy heart that we learn of the passing of Master Sgt. Michael Riley in Afghanistan," Ferguson said. "Mike was an experienced Special Forces noncommissioned officer and the veteran of five previous deployments to Afghanistan. We will honor his service and sacrifice as we remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission."

Riley's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, five Army Commendation Medals, the Special Forces Tab, the Ranger Tab and the Combat In-

fantryman Badge, according to the Army.

He was the second member of his unit killed in action this year in Afghanistan. Army Sgt. 1st Class Will D. Lindsay, a Green Beret with 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group, died March 22 during combat operations in the northern Kunduz province. An EOD soldier, Spc. Joseph P. Collette, was also killed in that incident.

NATO's U.S.-led Resolute Support mission announced the deaths Wednesday without providing the names of the soldiers or further details. Pentagon policy is to wait 24 hours after next of kin are notified before releasing the names of servicemembers who have died.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said Thursday that the group was responsible for the killings but was unable to provide any details.

On Wednesday, the insurgents said they had killed two Americans in an ambush in Wardak province, about 60 miles south of Kabul. Uruzgan province is far from Kabul, about 35 miles north of Kandahar. The United States has not indicated soldiers besides Johnston and Riley were killed this week in Afghanistan.

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Johnston



Riley

Marines fire officer at Leavenworth

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

The commander of Marines assigned to the Army's Fort Leavenworth in Kansas was fired last week, according to a statement from the Marine Corps Combat Development Command.

Col. William Blanchard was relieved of command by Brig. Gen. William Bowers, commander of the Marine Corps Education Command, on June 19 "due to a loss of trust and confidence in his ability to command," according to the statement.

The Leavenworth detachment falls under Bowers' command, which reports to the Combat Development Command at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

Lt. Col. John Knutson, the detachment's executive officer, has been temporarily assigned as the acting commanding officer.

The Combat Development Command declined to comment on whether there is an investigation of Blanchard and his firing. The command also did not comment on when Blanchard took command of the detachment and how many Marines he oversaw at the Army base.

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MILITARY

173rd Airborne Brigade gets new commander

By NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — Incoming 173rd Airborne Brigade commander Col. Kenneth Burgess has been on a well-trodden path. Following a stint at the Army War College after commanding the 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, his last three postings were the same as Col. James Bartholomees' were when he took command of the 173rd two years ago.

It is "a privilege and a blessing to be once again following in your footsteps," Burgess told Bartholomees at Thursday's change of command ceremony at Del Din.

Bartholomees, who is headed to a Pentagon post, was looking ahead to a change of pace.

After 24 years in the Army, 11 combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, command at battalion, regiment and brigade level, "It'll be my first experience in the Pentagon," he said.

Bartholomees is to be executive officer to Lt. Gen. Walter Platt, the director of Army staff. Asked if he'd been given advice about working at the Pentagon, he said he's been told it's "all about relationships and building teams."

Commanding the 173rd had been, and is sure to be, the best job of his career, Bartholomees said.



Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Incoming 173rd Airborne Brigade commander Col. Kenneth Burgess, left, inspects the formation along with deputy commander Lt. Col. Kurt Cyr, second from left, and Col. James Bartholomees, outgoing commander, Thursday in Vicenza, Italy.

"The autonomy, the mission, the focus. This is the pinnacle," he said. "I feel like I won the lottery with this job."

He said he was fortunate to arrive at the brigade as NATO allies had stepped up rotations into the Baltics, following the 173rd's initial deployments there in 2014 to reas-

sure allies after Russia annexed Crimea. That freed up the brigade's battalions to train more collectively and cohesively.

"Instead of sending small units to places, we were able to come together and do larger training," he said.

The convergence of some 4,000 troops

— American, Italian, Dutch, British and French — for war games at the training center in Hohenfels was a highlight of 2017, Bartholomees said.

"You get to test all your warfighting functions in fighting against a near peer challenge," he said. "It opened our eyes, no kidding, to what deterrence looks like."

Another exercise, Saber Junction, is coming up in September.

"It hurts me not to be able to lead the brigade that one last time," he said.

During the hourlong ceremony, both commanders offered up praise to local Italians, military allies, higher-ranking officers, lower-ranking officers, wives, children and the 173rd troops. The troops were designed, equipped and trained "to deter our enemies from making a move that they will soon regret," Bartholomees said.

Burgess said that they were "a cohesive team of fit, disciplined and competent paratroopers who tirelessly prepare themselves to deploy at a moment's notice, to accomplish any assigned mission and to destroy any foe."

But he noticed a deficiency during "The Army Song" singalong at the ceremony's end.

"They can't hold a tune, but I assume they can fight," Burgess said.

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New Army commander takes charge at Camp Humphreys

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Col. Michael Tremblay assumed command of Camp Humphreys on Thursday as the Army's new home in South Korea faces the final push in its much-delayed expansion.

Tremblay, a career infantryman, inherits a garrison that has experienced growing pains, including housing problems and traffic jams, as its population more than tripled to surpass 35,000 in just over three years. It's ultimately expected to reach more than 40,000.

The next major move is due to occur when the problem-plagued hospital finally opens in November, triggering the final steps toward closing Yongsan Garrison in Seoul, which had served as the main U.S. military base in South Korea in the decades after the 1950-53 Korean War.

Tremblay, 46, of Schoolcraft, Mich., was most recently the executive officer to the deputy commander of U.S. Central Command in Florida.

The regional director for the Army's Installation Management



Kim Gamel/Stars and Stripes

Col. Michael Tremblay assumes command of Camp Humphreys during a ceremony at the Army garrison in Pyeongtaek, South Korea, on Thursday.

Command praised the outgoing garrison commander, Col. Scott Mueller, for his efforts in helping to transform what was once a remote outpost into the largest overseas U.S. military base.

"In addition to finalizing facilities, barracks and headquarters buildings, he was charged with

building a vibrant community and he has done an exceptional job of that task," Christine Altdorff said during the change of command ceremony, which was held in the main gymnasium on Camp Humphreys.

Mueller's next job is deputy chief of staff for European Com-

mand in Germany.

The garrison was hit with a series of complaints about housing on Humphreys, including children stuck in elevators, mold and slow responses to work orders, during a town hall meeting in February as part of a campaign to deal with a militarywide crisis.

The leadership responded swiftly, including establishing an elevator task force, and has expressed confidence that the most severe problems have been resolved.

Camp Humphreys, which now resembles a small American town in the rural area of Pyeongtaek, about 55 miles south of Seoul, is the centerpiece of a nearly \$11 billion expansion project as part of a frequently delayed plan to relocate most U.S. forces south from bases in Seoul and near the border with North Korea.

South Korea agreed to fund most of the construction and provide the labor, but the move was postponed several times over the years due to quality control concerns and other problems.

It was expedited in recent years, and U.S. Forces Korea, the Eighth Army, the 2nd Infantry Division and other commands

have moved their headquarters to the sprawling base.

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Littoral combat ship hits Canadian freighter; no injuries

The (Jacksonville) Florida Times-Union

A littoral combat ship scheduled to be stationed at Naval Station Mayport, Fla., was slightly damaged when it hit a cargo ship that was moored in Montreal, the Navy reported Monday.

The not-yet-commissioned Billings hit the

freighter Rosaire A. Desgagnés as the Billings was getting underway the afternoon of June 21, said a Navy spokeswoman, Lt. Cmdr. Courtney Hillson.

No one was injured on either vessel, Hillson said. Hillson described the impact as an allision, meaning one ship striking another that

isn't moving.

Only minor damage was reported from the impact, but Hillson said the Billings remained in Montreal while a full inspection was performed. The Billings is scheduled to be commissioned Aug. 3 and will be home-ported at Mayport.

PACIFIC

Piano: 9-year-old prodigy performs for audiences around world

FROM FRONT PAGE

"He got excited, and after she left he started telling me that he wanted to play piano," Naomi Lee said.

"So, we went to the piano shop, not for shopping, but to see if he'd like the real piano."

Hayden started to play works by Bach from memory at the store and impressed the piano shop's assistants, she said. His parents eventually purchased an upright piano for him to play at home.

Following the steps of a pianist he saw on YouTube, Hayden began to develop the technique of visualizing shapes and colors to play songs by ear.

"My husband and I were asking each other how he did it," Naomi Lee said. "He listened [to a composition on YouTube] every day, he memorized it and he played it."

Hayden's first piano teacher while in Hawaii, Akiko Sanai, taught him for about two years. She remembers him being at about the same level as other students when he started out.

"My teaching technique is not different from other teachers," she told Stars and Stripes in an email.

"My demand gets high for students who have potential to play at high standards; Hayden was



CARLOS VAZQUEZ/Stars and Stripes

Hayden Lee, 9, performs at Kubasaki High School on Camp Foster, Okinawa, on June 12.

one of those students."

Soon, Hayden was receiving invitations to perform and compete

at prestigious venues around the world.

Shortly before moving to Japan,

he played in Rome, where he won first place in the Grand Prize Virtuoso International Music

Competition, and also performed at Teatro Studio at Parco della Musica.

Those performances led to invitations for him to play in March at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall during the Golden Classical Music Awards International Music Competition, where he won first place.

"There is no limit," Sanai said. "I think he will be who he wants to be and do what he wants to do with piano."

In his two years playing piano, Hayden has won a stack of awards, including first-place showings at the Great Composers Competition, the International Internet Music Competition and The Art of Piano competition, in addition to the Golden Classical Music Awards in New York.

Hayden said he owes much of his success to "practice makes perfect."

"You should always practice and never get distracted," he said. "You can't just snap and just learn something."

Despite all the hard work, Naomi Lee said her son is just like any other kid.

"When you see him, meet him and talk to him, he's a regular 9-year-old boy," she said. "But he loves music; he loves piano."

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MILITARY

US helps build Kazakhstan into a stable partner

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

ALMATY, Kazakhstan — On a plain in rural Kazakhstan, soldiers from this former Soviet republic worked with American troops and coalition partners to practice neutralizing snipers, to help women who were victims of violence and to locate hidden weapons.

The scenarios were part of the annual, U.S.-led Steppe Eagle exercises, but the increase in Kazakhstan's contributions to global peacekeeping and security efforts, after more than a decade of such training with the Americans, is very real.

"Kazakhstan has become an exporter of security," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Dan Horst, the officer in charge of the American contingent at Steppe Eagle, as the weeklong exercise wrapped up in a training area near Almaty.

"They're not just consuming assistance to get better; they're better now, and they're contributing to the security picture," Horst said.

Kazakhstan is the country in Central Asia doing the most to help U.S. efforts to stabilize Afghanistan, Central Command said in a posture statement released in February.

The Kazakhs trade with the Afghans, provide electrical power and educational opportunities, support programs for Afghan women, donate to a fund to develop the Afghan national security forces and offer technical support and services to the Afghans, CENTCOM said.

With U.S. help, Kazakhstan became, in November last year, the first Central Asian country to deploy a company-level unit to Lebanon on a U.N. peacekeeping mission, CENTCOM said in the statement.

The Central Asian country has been renovating the Chilikemer Training Area, where Steppe Eagle took place, over the last several months, hoping that other countries in the region will send their troops there for peacekeeping training.

The strong ties between the U.S. and Kazakhstan contrast sharply with the Soviet era. As Russia's economy has faltered, its influence in Central Asia has waned, creating an opening for the U.S. — and China — to step in, said Kamran Bokhari, founding director of the Washington-based Center for Global Policy.

"In many ways, the U.S. is late to the game," he said. "The question is, how can the U.S. insert itself and ensure China is not making big gains in Central Asia?"

Today, relations between the U.S. and the sprawling, strategically situated, oil-rich nation has been hailed by CENTCOM as the "most mature and forward-thinking in Central Asia."

Kazakhstan, and Central Asia, used to be seen more for what they were close to or in-between, rather than for what the countries themselves had to offer," said Gavin Helf, senior expert on Central Asia for the United States Institute of Peace.

"But that's changing," he said. Maintaining military-to-military programs in Kazakhstan



J.P. LAWRENCE/Stars and Stripes

A Kazakh soldier mans the turret of a Humvee during the U.S.-led Steppe Eagle exercise near Almaty, Kazakhstan, on Sunday. Kazakhstan has developed strong ties with the U.S. since the Soviet era.

with a focus on building defense institutions and professional military education "will position us to maintain our comparative advantage with a country situated on the doorsteps of Russia and China," CENTCOM said in its posture statement.

Balancing act

Kazakhstan continues to have to balance relations with its two powerful neighbors, Russia and China, against those with the U.S.

"When you live between two strong regional powers, both of whom do not always 100% have your best interests at heart, it's nice to have friends," Helf said in an email.

Although the U.S. will likely never be as important to Central Asian countries as either China or Russia, Helf said, it can be an influential "third friend" in the region.

As it builds relations, the U.S. must understand the constraints Kazakhstan is operating under, including the need to "avoid actions Russia interprets as threatening" and the fact that, even as

the U.S. tries to wean the Kazakhs and other Central Asian countries off Russian weapons systems, U.S. military equipment may be too expensive for them.

Kazakhstan is a member of a collective security pact with Russia and Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan that allows it to purchase military equipment at preferential prices. Kazakhstan trains its soldiers at military universities in Russia and Belarus, the Kazakh mission to the U.N. states on its website, and the country is reportedly one of the most active members of the organization, contributing troops to a collective rapid reaction force.

Though the most prosperous country in Central Asia, Kazakhstan suffered an economic downturn that began in 2014 in Moscow and came to Astana, and corruption, bureaucracy, and arbitrary law enforcement remain concerns, according to the CIA World Factbook.

In part because of U.S.-led exercises like Steppe Eagle, however, the Kazakh military has undergone a sea change in just a

few years, Horst said. It's transitioning from a Soviet-style model, in which officers are paramount, to a Western-style one that gives more power to noncommissioned officers, he said.

Exercises like Steppe Eagle have helped Kazakh soldiers develop skills that allow them to work seamlessly with troops from other countries, Kazakh Maj. Amangaliuly Assylkhan told Stars and Stripes, in English.

Compared with a few decades ago, when Kazakhs would have spoken Russian as a first or second language, many of them today speak English, Horst said.

"They'll use their English skills on peacekeeping duties in Lebanon," said Horst, adding that a well-trained, modern Kazakh military will have a positive impact on the entire Central Asia region.

"The more we can empower our partners to solve regional problems, the less dependent they will be on us or other Western forces to maintain peace and stability," he said.

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Afghan president talks peace, renews ties in Pakistan visit

By MUNIR AHMED
Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — Afghanistan's president Thursday praised Pakistan's efforts to advance the peace process in the region as he reached out to Islamabad for help in bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table with the Kabul government, Pakistani officials said.

Ashraf Ghani's remarks came at the start of a two-day visit to Pakistan, his first since elections that brought Prime Minister Imran Khan to power last year. The visit is also seen as an attempt by Ghani to reset the often-strained relationship between the two neighbors amid the stalled peace push with the Taliban.

Ghani arrived in Islamabad a day after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited Kabul, where he said Washington was hopeful of a peace deal before Sept. 1. His visit also came after dozens of Afghan po-

litical leaders — but no Taliban representatives — attended a peace conference in Pakistan last week to pave the way for further Afghan-Taliban dialogue. Pakistan has facilitated ongoing peace talks between Washington and the Taliban as U.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad tries to find a negotiated end to the 17-year war in Afghanistan.

Ghani on Thursday first met with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi before holding a one-on-one meeting with Khan.

During his meeting with Qureshi, the Afghan president thanked Islamabad and "praised Pakistan's role in the peace process," according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

Later, he met with Khan in his sprawling office.

According to a government statement, the two leaders "agreed to open a new chapter of friendship and cooperation be-

tween Pakistan and Afghanistan, based on mutual trust and harmony for the benefit of the two peoples and countries and for advancing the cause of peace, stability and prosperity in the region."

It said Ghani and Khan also agreed that enduring peace in Afghanistan would bring rich economic dividends to both the countries.

It said Khan "reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to support the Afghan peace process as a shared responsibility." It quoted Khan as saying that Pakistan supports a result-oriented intra-Afghan dialogue.

Ghani was also scheduled to meet with President Arif Alvi before traveling to the eastern city of Lahore to attend a gathering of businessmen.

He met with Khan ahead of the next round of talks Saturday between the Taliban and Khalilzad in Qatar, where the insurgents maintain a political office.

Ghani was expected to meet with Pakistan's army chief, Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa, who is believed to have played a key role in arranging talks between Khalilzad and the Taliban in recent months.

An earlier attempt at restart Afghan-to-Afghan talks was scuttled after neither side could agree on the list of participants.

Ghani is convinced that Pakistan yields considerable influence over the Taliban and can play a role in arranging direct talks with his government. Islamabad says its influence over the militant Islamic movement is overstated.

Khan has been a strident critic of Islamabad's previous participation in Washington's so-called war on terrorism. However, he promised after winning the polls last July that his government would be "partners in peace," and since then has said Islamabad would do whatever is needed for the success of the peace process.

EUROPE

Europeans sweat through record heat spell

Bloomberg

Europeans fought to stay cool as a blast of hot air from the Sahara desert sent temperatures to records in large parts of the continent and whipped up concern about climate change.

Germany imposed speed restrictions on usually limit-free stretches of its highway network, and several people were stopped by police for stripping in public. About 60% of vehicles registered in the Paris area were ordered off the roads, while shops in the French capital ran out of fans and air conditioners, rarely used by most residents. In Rome, keepers at the city's zoo fed animals frozen treats.

"Hell is coming," tweeted TV meteorologist Silvia Laplana from Spain, where temperatures exceeded 104 degrees Fahrenheit and authorities warned of an "extreme" risk of forest fires.

Thursday was to mark the peak



PETER DAVID JOSEK/AP

A polar bear enjoys a frozen treat made with fish, vegetables and fruit on a hot Thursday at the Prague Zoo in the Czech Republic.

of the current hot spell in Europe, the World Meteorological Organization said. Weather watchers blame climate change for bring-

ing air from the Sahara desert into Western Europe.

Concern the heat wave would

further damage Alpine glaciers that feed European rivers like the Rhine increased Wednesday as Switzerland's meteorological agency said the 8,209-foot Saentis mountain in the eastern canton of St. Gallen recorded its highest daily minimum temperature of 60.8 degrees Fahrenheit.

Across Germany, 51 weather stations broke June temperature records. Forecasts for high temperatures raised fears of potentially deadly cracks on Autobahn surfaces, prompting the imposition of speed restrictions. Police in the German state of Brandenburg on Wednesday halted a moped rider who was naked apart from sandals and a crash helmet. That followed an incident Tuesday when a 32-year-old man in rural Germany ran naked through the freezer section of a supermarket to cool off. DWD issued ultraviolet ray warnings for all but Germany's most northern states.

The hot spell rippled through European power markets. Electricity prices across the continent surged on expectations Europeans would turn on fans and air conditioning units to keep cool. European Union permits to emit carbon dioxide — a major input for electricity prices — rose to their highest levels since April. In Milan, where a surge in power usage hit a record on June 19, the local municipal power company A2A said it expects demand to rise further. It asked residents to use home appliances like dishwashers in the evening and switch off lights, computers and televisions when not needed.

Brussels has suspended horse-and-carriage rides for tourists. The decision was taken out of respect for the animals' welfare, said Fabian Maingain, the Belgian city's chief for economic affairs, told Le Soir newspaper.

Air: High temperatures lead to some temporary changes in Army training

FROM FRONT PAGE

In comparison, the city saw only 39 days above that temperature from 1975 to 1980, and 50 in 1985-90, according to the German Meteorological Service.

Central air conditioning in German homes is a rarity, with most historically built to endure cold winters, though snowfall is typically light in Kaiserslautern.

About 60 miles to the city's northwest at Spangdahlem Air Base, a family housing brochure states that air conditioning isn't allowed in government units because homes "should be built to mirror units found in the off-base community." Air Force installations in Germany also require waivers for air conditioning in hopes of cutting energy costs.

Ramstein said they don't expect major changes to the base air conditioning policy, which is currently under revision.

"No one would deny that we have very hot days in Germany," said Lt. Col. Kevin Parker, 86th Civil Engineer Group commander. "However, the number of days and severity, according to cross-service policy, do not warrant the expense of installing or maintaining comfort cooling."

A January 2018 policy at Ramstein Air Base states that Kaiserslautern averages only 17 hours above 90 degrees and 48 hours above 85 degrees per year.

That data appears outdated. The average high temperature in Kaiserslautern from June, July and August from 2013 to 2018 was 91 degrees, according to a Stars and Stripes analysis using data from the Agricultural Meteorological Service Rheinland-Pfalz weather website. During that six-year period, all but three months had at least one day over 89 degrees.

"Extreme weather events have increased throughout Germany," said Harald Hofstaetter, a techni-

cian with the weather service.

On Wednesday, Germany recorded its highest June temperatures in history as the mercury rose to 101.5 degrees in parts of the country.

Italy, which includes major Navy, Army and Air Force installations, is also experiencing temperatures upward of triple digits, but there are fewer restrictions on air conditioning there.

In Germany, however, Army personnel can't add air conditioning units in their base homes or office spaces without permission.

Approval must first be granted by the local garrison department of public works director.

"The DPW can approve exceptions to policy in coordination with the garrison energy manager for communications rooms, health care facilities and secure facilities," Johnson said.

Garrison commanders can approve portable cooling devices in Army family housing for medical conditions recognized by the Exceptional Family Member Program screening process, he said. Other requests require IMCOM-Europe review. For those, "approvals are generally granted if the justification validated/endorsed by the garrison DPW and is in line with the IMCOM-E policy," Johnson said.

Multiple stores in Kaiserslautern had plenty of portable air conditioning units on sale a couple of weeks ago, but most were gone Thursday.

Meanwhile, the heat wave has altered some Army training operations.

To reduce the risk of fire, soldiers have stopped using tracer rounds on live-fire ranges at Grafenwoehr, home of the Army's largest training area in Europe.

giant major.

His advice for soldiers and civilian employees on base: Stay hydrated and go to air-conditioned places like the post exchange and the commissary during the hottest parts of the day.

Lack of tracers hasn't affected Bavaria's Hohenfels Training Area, which focuses on war games that do not use live am-

munition, but officials there have pushed some training to later in the afternoon.

The heat wave comes as annual rates for heatstroke across the U.S. military have risen steadily from about three cases per 10,000 people in 2014 to nearly five per 10,000 last year, according to military data.

The command at Grafenwoehr

has told leaders that making sure soldiers and others get enough water is "leadership 101," Sutterfield said.

"We're especially worried about at-risk groups of people, like pregnant women, children and the elderly," Sutterfield said.

Stars and Stripes reporters Jennifer H. Swan and Marcus Kloeckner contributed to this story.

ACCOMPLISH WHAT OTHERS CAN'T

U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS



NATION

Trump, Dems clash over migrant deaths

By JILL COLVIN,
DEB RIECHMANN
AND WILL WEISSEITZ
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump and Democrats clashed Wednesday over who was to blame for the deaths of a migrant father and his daughter whose drowned bodies were seen in searing photos from the U.S.-Mexico border.

"Watching that image of Oscar and his daughter Valeria was heartbreaking. It should also piss us all off," former Obama housing chief Julian Castro said during the first of two nights of Democratic presidential debates. "And it should spur us to action."

Trump, when asked about the image, said, "I hate it." But he argued the deaths would not have happened with-



Castro

out Democrats dragging their feet on congressional legislation to toughen security at the border.

"I know it could stop immediately if the Democrats change the law. They have to change the laws. And then that father, who probably was this wonderful guy, with his daughter, things like that wouldn't happen."

The photo of Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez and daughter Valeria, who were trying to cross into the U.S. after fleeing from El Salvador when they were swept into the Rio Grande, added an emotional punch to a debate at the center of the 2020 White House contest. Trump is campaigning on hard-line immigration policies aimed at reducing the flow of migrants coming to the U.S. — policies Democrats have called inhumane.

Castro, also a former San Antonio mayor, said that if elected, he'd use executive orders to immediately end the Trump administration's "zero tolerance" immigration policies, which briefly led to immigrant families being separated at the border. Other candidates made similar

promises, and said they'd work with Congress to hammer out pathways to U.S. citizenship for millions of immigrants living in the country illegally — especially those brought here as children.

But there wasn't total agreement on immigration among the 10 presidential hopefuls on the debate stage. When former congressman Beto O'Rourke said "we will spare no expense to reunite families" that remain separated, Castro interrupted, demanding to know why his fellow Texan won't agree with him that crossing the U.S.-Mexico border illegally should be fully decriminalized.

"I just think it's a mistake, Beto," Castro said, dismissing O'Rourke's concern that doing so could protect drug- and people-smugglers. "I think that you should do your homework on this issue."

Wednesday's debate also featured a lot of Spanish, with O'Rourke speaking at length in the language during his first answer, and later getting and answering a question in it. New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker and Castro also spoke briefly in Spanish.

Before the debate started, several Democratic candidates visited a detention facility for immigrant teenagers in Homestead, Fla.

"There were children who were being marched like little soldiers, like little prisoners," said Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who wasn't allowed inside but was permitted to look over the fence. California Rep. Eric Swalwell and Sen. Amy Klobuchar, of Minnesota, also visited the facility. O'Rourke and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders are planning to go, as are Castro and Sens. Kamala Harris, of California and Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, former Maryland Rep. John Delaney, and Pete Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Ind.

The Senate and House have approved separate legislation to provide funding for the care of migrants streaming into the U.S., but the bills have yet to be merged and the next step is unclear. Congressional leaders hope to send Trump a compromise measure before lawmakers leave town for a July 4 recess.

Doctors, lawyers portray dire conditions for child migrants

Associated Press

CLINT, Texas — Immigrant advocates have asked a federal judge to issue an emergency order requiring immediate inspections and access for doctors at border detention facilities where they say children are languishing in filthy conditions.

The federal court filing Wednesday follows last week's discovery of children in a Border Patrol facility in Clint, Texas, who were locked up for weeks and tasked with caring for toddlers.

Lawyers say sleep-deprived, flu-stricken immigrant children are being crammed into frigid facilities that threaten to sicken vulnerable children. One doctor compared the locations to torture centers.

The attorneys are also asking for the prompt release of children to parents and close relatives.

The filing comes in a decades-old federal court case over detention conditions for immigrant children.

A message was sent to the Department of Homeland Security.



JULIA LE DUC/AP

Authorities stand along the Rio Grande bank where the bodies of Salvadoran migrant Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez and his daughter, Valeria, were found in Matamoros, Mexico, on Monday.

Migrant: Young family ignored advice against border swim

By CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN
AND MARCOS ALEMAN
Associated Press

MATAMOROS, Mexico — The young family from El Salvador appeared in this border city over the weekend with fear already on their faces.

They went to the downtown bridge that leads to Brownsville, Texas, where Xiomara Mejia, herself also a migrant from Central America, explained that the newcomers would not be able to add their names to the long list of families waiting to apply for asylum in the United States until Monday.

"I noticed they were really nervous, scared," she said. "They had panic on their faces."

"They said to me, 'You haven't tried to cross the river?'" Mejia said. "We said to them, 'No,' because of the children more than anything. I don't know how to swim and my kids do, but either way I'm not going to risk it."

Mejia had arrived in Matamoros from Honduras with her husband and three children on May 8. They said Wednesday that there were only two families still in line ahead of them to file their asylum applications with the U.S. government. They started out in March from San Pedro Sula, the second-largest city in crime-plagued Honduras.

After chatting, the Salvadoran family said they would come back Monday, Mejia said.

"I didn't think they were going to decide to cross the river," she said Wednesday.

On Sunday, not far downriver from that bridge, the family

crossed a popular bike and jogging path and walked down a slope through the brush to the Rio Grande's edge. Not far upriver there had been soccer games on fields beside the river and even an outdoor yoga class.

The river does not appear wide there, maybe 20 to 30 yards, but vegetation carried by the current passes swiftly.

Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez, 25, and his 23-month-old daughter, Valeria, were swept away. Their bodies were recovered Monday morning, lying face down by the river bank a few hundred yards downstream, a heartbreaking scene captured in a news photo showing the girl tucked inside her father's shirt for protection.

Martinez's wife, Tania Vanessa Avalos, 21, was expected to accompany the bodies of her husband and daughter back to El Salvador on Thursday.

Martinez had shared a sea-green brick home with barred windows in San Martin on the outskirts of the capital, San Salvador, with his mother, his wife and their daughter.

In their working-class neighborhood of about 40,000 people, Martinez worked in a pizzeria and Avalos was a cashier in a fast-food restaurant, said his mother, Rosa Ramirez.

The area has had problems with gang violence, but these days it's calm, she said. She said her son never had any problems with gangs, and he left with his family for economic reasons.

Ramirez said she had given them the big room in the two-bedroom house, but they dreamed

of saving money for a place of their own and the dream drove the family to head for the United States in early April.

"I told him, 'Son, don't go. But if you do go, leave me the girl,'" Ramirez said.

"No, mama," she said he replied. "How can you think that I would leave her?"

Now she feels a hole that "no body can fill, but God gives me strength."

The region along the U.S.-Mexico border has long been perilous for those trying to cross illegally into the United States between ports of entry, from the fast-moving Rio Grande to the scalding Sonoran Desert. A total of 283 people died while trying to cross last year; figures for 2019 have not yet been released.

On Sunday, Martinez decided to make that journey, swimming with Valeria from Matamoros to the Texas side of the Rio Grande, where he left her on the riverbank and started back to get his wife. Seeing him leave, the girl threw herself into the water. Martinez returned to get her, but both were swept away. Avalos was not harmed.

Tamaulipas immigration official Enrique Maciel said Wednesday that Avalos was "in a total shock" and would not be speaking to reporters. Covered in white sheets, the two bodies were placed into a morgue van to be driven to a funeral home.

"She is afflicted. She is suffering. It is a dream they had to get ahead as a family, the three of them, and she returns in mourning with only the bodies of her family," Maciel said.

NATION

Health care and immigration top issues at debate

By JUANA SUMMERS
AND STEVE PEOPLES
Associated Press

MIAMI — Ten Democrats railed against a national economy and a Republican administration they argued exist only for the rich as presidential candidates debated onstage for the first time in the young 2020 season, embracing inequality as a defining theme in their fight to deny President Donald Trump a second term in office.

Health care and immigration, more than any other issues, led the first of two debates on Wednesday, with another to follow Thursday night. Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, more than anyone else, stood out on her own at times — in calling for “fundamental change” across the nation’s economy and government to address a widening gap between the rich and the middle class.

“I think of it this way. Who is this economy really working for? It’s doing great for a thinner and thinner slice at the top,” Warren declared shortly before raising her hand as the only

Democrats on stage willing to abolish her own private health insurance in favor of a government-run plan. “Health care is a basic human right, and I will fight for basic human rights.”

The debate marked a major step forward in the 2020 presidential campaign as Democrats fight to break out from a crowded field that has been consumed by one question above all: Who’s best positioned to defeat Trump? The candidates will spend the next eight months before primary voting scrapping over that question and the broader fight for the direction of their political party.

Among the 10 Democratic candidates set to debate Thursday is early front-runner Joe Biden.

While Trump is the ultimate target of many Democratic voters, the president wasn’t a major feature for most of Wednesday night. Washington Gov. Jay Inslee was one of the few to go hard after Trump, declaring, “The biggest threat to the security of the United States is Donald Trump.”

Instead of Trump, Democrats leaned into the issue that helped deliver the party the House majority last year: Health care. All



WILFREDO LEE/AP

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., gestures toward New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker during the first Democratic primary debate in Miami on Wednesday night.

supported the concept of providing universal health care, but they differed on how they would reach that goal.

Warren and New York Mayor Bill de Blasio backed abolishing private health insurance. Former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke and Sen. Amy Klobuchar, of Minnesota, favored preserving the private insurance market.

O'Rourke said people who like their health care plans should be able to keep them. “We preserve choice,” he said.

The exchange is almost certain to be repeated on Thursday when Bernie Sanders is among the candidates who will be on stage. The

Vermont senator has proposed a “Medicare for All” system without private insurance while Biden, who will also be debating, hasn’t gone that far.

Immigration was also on the candidates’ minds as they pointed to the searing photos of a drowned Salvadoran father and his toddler daughter at the Rio Grande and blamed Trump and his policies concerning migrants crossing into America illegally.

“Watching that image of Oscar and his daughter Valeria was heartbreaking,” said former Obama administration housing chief Julian Castro. “It should also piss us all off.”

He also assailed O'Rourke for

not calling for fully decriminalizing crossing the U.S.-Mexico border illegally.

“I just think it’s a mistake, Beto,” he said, adding that O'Rourke would agree with him “if you did your homework on this issue.”

O'Rourke says he doesn’t support fully decriminalizing such border crossings because of fears about smugglers of drugs and people.

Castro told MSNBC on Thursday that his performance “showed that I can more than handle myself” at a time when voters are seeking a Democrat who can take on Trump.

Dems in Miami for debate journey to child migrant camp

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON
Associated Press

HOMESTEAD, Fla. — As a national furor unfolded over the harsh conditions immigrant children are being subjected to in the U.S., Democratic presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren climbed a step ladder and waved at teenagers being held behind a chain-link fence covered with a mesh screen.

These children pose no threat to people here in the United States of America,” the Massachusetts senator told reporters when she was back on solid ground, “and yet they are locked up here for weeks, for months, because our government is following a policy of inflicting maximum pain on families that flee here trying to build a better life.”

Warren is one of nearly a dozen White House hopefuls who transformed the nation’s largest child migrant detention center into a must-stop destination on the campaign trail. With presidential debates Wednesday and Thursday in nearby Miami, candidates were eager to visit Homestead to turn the facility into a symbol of the Trump administration’s harsh treatment of young migrants.



DANIEL A. VARELA, MIAMI HERALD/AP

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Amy Klobuchar, of Minnesota, requests to be let into the Homestead Detention Center in Homestead, Fla., on Wednesday.

That treatment could become a galvanizing issue for Americans following the drownings earlier this week of a Salvadoran man and his toddler daughter, captured by a journalist in a searing photograph.

President Donald Trump on Wednesday blamed Democrats for the deaths, saying their party refuses to fund his immigration priorities and change laws for entering the country. Democrats accuse the Republican president of preventing families from seeking asylum and of holding migrant children in filthy conditions, such as the ones found last week by a team of lawyers at a border facility in Clint, Texas.

Warren, unveiling her plan to ban private detention providers, last week called out Calburn International, the private company

behind the Homestead site, for recently appointing former White House chief of staff John Kelly as a board member.

The year before Trump was sworn in, Kelly had served on the boards of the private equity firm that created Calburn. In 2017, he became the first official to say publicly that the Trump administration was considering separating children from their parents to deter families from journeying north. Warren and other lawmakers have urged investigations into the latest no-bid contract awarded to one of the company’s subsidiaries for \$341 million.

The teens at the Homestead facility are mostly fleeing gang violence or poverty. Although many traveled to the U.S. without family, they have described in court documents the devastation of being taken from aunts, uncles or older siblings before ending up in custody of the Department of Health and Human Services. Last year, a now-defunct policy implemented by the Trump administration led to more than 2,700 children being separated from parents, causing mass outrage.

None of the candidates has been allowed into the Homestead facility, which holds about 2,500

children.

Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar stopped by on Wednesday afternoon, and California Rep. Eric Swalwell visited on Monday. Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke scheduled campaign stops Thursday, and six others, including South Bend, Ind., Mayor Pete Buttigieg, announced Friday visits.

Protesters have been a regular presence outside the facility. Drenched in sweat from the intense heat, protesters on Wednesday shouted “Homes Instead!” A mother showed up with her three young children, two of whom sat in a stroller and held signs that read “Close the camps.”

Republicans accused the Democratic candidates of trying to score cheap political points with the pilgrimages to Homestead, saying they should be focused on crafting solutions to problems with the nation’s immigration system.

“If Democrats actually cared about the migrant children instead of using them for political purposes, they would close the border,” Republican National Committee spokesman Steve Guest said.

NATION

High court: Redistricting is not judicial matter

Census citizenship question put on hold in decisions before a break

By MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In two politically charged rulings, the Supreme Court dealt a huge blow Thursday to efforts to combat the drawing of electoral districts for partisan gain but put a hold on the Trump administration's effort to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census.

On the court's final day of decisions before a summer break, the conservative justices ruled that federal courts have no role to play in the dispute over the practice known as partisan gerrymandering. The decision could embolden political line-drawing for partisan gain when state lawmakers undertake the next round of redistricting following the 2020 census.

Voters and elected officials should be the arbiters of what is a political dispute, Chief Justice John Roberts said in his opinion for the court.

The court rejected challenges to Republican-drawn congressional districts in North Carolina and a Democratic district in Maryland.

The decision was a major blow to critics of the partisan manipulation of electoral maps that can result when one party controls redistricting.

The districting plans "are highly partisan by any measure," Roberts said.

But he said courts are the wrong place to settle these disputes.

In dissent for the four liberals, Justice Elena Kagan wrote, "For the first time ever, this court re-



J. SCOTT APPELWHEAT/AP

Demonstrators gather Thursday at the Supreme Court as the justices finished the term with a ruling that federal courts have no role in the drawing of political district lines and put a hold on a request to ask about citizenship in the 2020 census.

fuses to remedy a constitutional violation because it thinks the task beyond judicial capabilities." Kagan, in mournful tones, read a summary of her dissent in court to emphasize her disagreement.

Federal courts in five states concluded that redistricting plans put in place under one party's control could go too far and that there were ways to identify and manage excessively partisan districts. Those courts included 15 federal judges appointed by Republican and Democratic presidents reaching back to Jimmy Carter.

But the five Republican-appointed justices decided otherwise.

The decision effectively reverses the outcome of rulings in Maryland, Michigan, North Car-

olina and Ohio, where courts had ordered new maps drawn, and ends proceedings in Wisconsin, where a retrial was supposed to take place this summer after the Supreme Court last year threw out a decision on procedural grounds.

Proponents of limiting partisan gerrymandering still have several routes open to them, including challenges in state courts. There is a pending North Carolina lawsuit.

The North Carolina case has its roots in court decisions striking down some of the state's congressional districts because they were illegal racial gerrymanders.

When lawmakers drew new maps as a result, Republicans who controlled the legislature sought to perpetuate the 10-3

GOP advantage in the congressional delegation. Democratic voters sued over the new districts, complaining that they were driven by partisan concerns.

The voters won a lower court ruling, as did Democrats in Wisconsin who challenged state assembly districts. But when the Supreme Court threw out the Wisconsin ruling on procedural grounds that did not address the partisan gerrymandering claims, the justices also ordered a new look at the North Carolina case. A three-judge court largely reinstated its ruling.

In Maryland, Democrats controlled redistricting and sought to flip one district that had been represented by a Republican for 20 years. Their plan succeeded, and a lower court concluded that the

district violated the Constitution. The high court agreed to hear both cases.

In the census case, the court said the Trump administration's explanation for wanting to add the question was "more of a distraction" than an explanation. The administration had cited the need to improve enforcement of the Voting Rights Act.

It's unclear whether the administration would have time to provide a fuller account. Census forms are supposed to be printed beginning next week.

Roberts again had the court's opinion, with the four liberals joining him in the relevant part of the outcome.

A lower court found the administration violated federal law in the way it tried to add a question broadly asking about citizenship for the first time since 1950.

The Census Bureau's own experts have predicted that millions of Hispanics and immigrants would go uncounted if the census asked everyone if he or she is an American citizen.

Immigrant advocacy organizations and Democratic-led states, cities and counties argue the citizenship question is intended to discourage the participation of minorities, primarily Hispanics, who tend to support Democrats, from filling out census forms.

The challengers say they would get less federal money and fewer seats in Congress if the census asks about citizenship because people with noncitizens in their households would be less likely to fill out their census forms.

Evidence uncovered since the Supreme Court heard arguments in the case in late April supports claims that the citizenship question is part of a broader Republican effort to accrue political power at the expense of minorities, the challengers say.

The Constitution requires a census count every 10 years.

Abortion rights supporters sue to block Ark. restrictions

Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Abortion rights supporters on Wednesday challenged an Arkansas law banning the procedure 18 weeks into a woman's pregnancy and another requirement that they say would likely force the closure of the state's only surgical abortion clinic.

In all, the lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union and Planned Parenthood targets three abortion restrictions and asks a federal judge to block them before they take effect July 24. The abortion restrictions are among several approved by the majority-Republican Legislature this year. Arkansas currently bans abortion 20 weeks into a woman's pregnancy.

"Today, we're challenging three plainly unconstitutional laws that would completely outlaw abortions for many Arkansians and target health providers with restrictions that would push care even further out of reach," Holly Dickson, ACLU of Arkansas' legal director, said in a statement.

"Today, we're challenging three plainly unconstitutional laws that would completely outlaw abortions."

Holly Dickson

ACLU of Arkansas' legal director

The lawsuit was filed on behalf of Planned Parenthood Great Plains and Little Rock Family Planning Services. Planned Parenthood operates facilities in Little Rock and Fayetteville that administer abortion-inducing medication but don't perform surgical abortions. Little Rock Family Planning performs surgical abortions.

The plaintiffs also include a physician who administers abortion medication at Planned Parenthood's Fayetteville facility and a physician who is also Little Rock Family Planning's medical director.

The lawsuit is challenging a requirement that physicians who perform abortions be

board-certified or board-eligible in obstetrics and gynecology. Little Rock Family Planning "will almost certainly be forced to close" if the requirement takes effect, meaning no surgical abortions would be available in the state, the lawsuit says.

One physician who assists the clinic meets the requirement, but he lives in California and can fly in to provide care only three days every other month.

Arkansas' 18-week ban, which Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson signed into law in March, includes exceptions for rape, incest and medical emergencies. The lawsuit argues the ban is unconstitutional and prohibits abortions from being performed

before a fetus is viable.

Another law being challenged includes one prohibiting doctors from performing an abortion if it's solely being sought because the fetus is diagnosed with Down syndrome.

Attorney General Leslie Rutledge, a Republican, said she was reviewing the lawsuit to decide the appropriate next steps.

"As attorney general, it is my duty and honor to defend the sanctity of life and protect mothers and their unborn children," she said in a statement issued by her office.

The lawsuit comes as abortion rights supporters are fighting restrictions in GOP-led states that they say are aimed at ending the procedure.

Several states this year passed bans on abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detectable, as early as six weeks. Alabama has gone even further, outlawing virtually all abortions, even in cases of rape or incest. None of the bans has taken effect.

NATION

Social media firms explain safeguards

By MARCY GORDON

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Executives of Facebook, Google and Twitter faced questioning by a House panel Wednesday on their efforts to stanch terrorist content and viral misinformation on their social media platforms.

The scrutiny comes as the tech giants step up safety measures to forestall disinformation online targeting the Democratic presidential debates that started Wednesday night.

Lawmakers and tech industry executives are concerned that the debates could be targeted by Russian or other hostile parties to foment political conflict using social media, as happened in the 2016 election. U.S. intelligence officials have determined that Russia carried out a sweeping political disinformation campaign on social media to influence the election, and they have repeatedly warned about the threat of foreign meddling in American politics, especially ahead of elections.

"As the presidential debates

begin, we are building on our efforts to protect the public conversation and enforce our policies against platform manipulation," Twitter said in a statement Wednesday. "It's always an election year on Twitter."

Facebook said it will have "a dedicated team proactively monitoring for threats as well as investigating any reports of abuse in real time in the lead up to, during and following the debates."

The hearing by the Homeland Security Committee was prompted by the mosque shootings in New Zealand in March that killed 50 people, attributed to a self-professed white supremacist who livestreamed the attacks on Facebook.

Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., the panel's chairman, noted that the livestreamed massacre occurred nearly two years after Facebook, Twitter, Google and other big tech companies established a global internet forum to fight the spread of online terrorist content.

"I want to know how you will prevent content like the New Zea-

land attack video from spreading on your platforms again," Thompson told the information policy executives from the three companies. Thompson said he also wanted to know how the companies are working to keep hate speech and misinformation off their platforms.

Controversy over white nationalism and hate speech has dogged online platforms such as Facebook and Google's YouTube for years. In 2017, following the deadly violence in Charlottesville, Va., tech giants began banishing extremist groups and individuals espousing white supremacist views and support for violence. Facebook extended the ban to white nationalists.

The big tech companies now are under closer scrutiny than ever in Congress, following a stream of scandals including Facebook's lapses in opening the personal data of millions of users to Donald Trump's 2016 campaign. Google's dominant search engine and hyper data collection have raised privacy concerns and accusations by Republicans of suppressing

conservative viewpoints.

Monika Bickert, Facebook's head of global policy management, said at the hearing that in response to the events in New Zealand, the company now prohibits livestreaming by people who have violated rules covering organizations and individuals deemed dangerous and potentially violent.

The social network giant has improved its technology and techniques and is now able to more effectively detect terrorist content, including through tools now working in 19 languages, she said.

Twitter has suspended more than 1.5 million accounts for violations related to promoting terrorism from Aug. 1, 2015, to Dec. 31, 2018, said Nick Pickles, global senior strategist for public policy.

Google's policies for search, news and YouTube make clear the types of conduct that are prohibited, such as misrepresenting ownership or primary purpose, said Derek Slater, director of information policy.



Christopher W. Cox

Turmoil leads to changes at NRA

Associated Press

Infighting at the National Rifle Association exploded Wednesday, when the powerful association severed ties with its longtime public relations firm, suspended operations of its fiery online TV station and lost its top lobbyist.

The latest turmoil emerged just a year before the critical 2020 presidential elections when the NRA's ability to influence the outcome could decide the fate of gun rights.

Lobbyist Christopher W. Cox, long viewed as the likely successor to longtime CEO Wayne LaPierre, was placed on administrative leave about a week ago by the NRA, which claimed he was part of a failed attempt to extort LaPierre and push him out.

It also came within hours of the association officially severing ties with Ackerman McQueen, the Oklahoma-based public relations firm that has shaped some of the NRA's most memorable messages in the past decades.

Cox had been the executive director of the NRA's lobbying arm, the Institute for Legislative Action, since 2002.

His resignation was confirmed by NRA spokesman Andrew Arulanandam. No other comment was immediately made about his departure.

LaPierre announced Cox's resignation in an email sent Wednesday to staff and NRA board members that was obtained by The Associated Press.

In the past few months, the NRA has filed several lawsuits against Ackerman McQueen, accusing it of refusing to document its billings and of seeking to undermine the association. Ackerman McQueen has countered, claiming the NRA is trying to renege on its financial obligations and smear the public relations firm.

During its two decades by the NRA's side, Ackerman McQueen was responsible for crafting the association's aggressive messaging, including the famous "From my cold dead hands" line uttered by actor Charlton Heston in 2000.

Panel votes to subpoena after Conway skips hearing

By MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House Oversight Committee approved a subpoena Wednesday to force White House counselor Kellyanne Conway to appear before the panel as it looks into allegations that she repeatedly violated a federal law that limits political activity by government workers.

Conway did not show up at a hearing Wednesday, after the White House said Monday it would not allow her to appear. The Democratic-led panel voted 25-16 to issue a subpoena.

Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., the panel's chairman, said that Conway's actions were a clear-cut violation of the law and that President Donald Trump should fire her.

"This is about right and wrong. This is about the core principle of our democracy that no one in this country is above the law, not even Kellyanne Conway," Cummings said.

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel, which is unrelated to special counsel Robert Mueller's office, said earlier this month that Conway has been "repeated offender" of the federal Hatch Act by disparaging Democratic presidential candidates while speaking in her official capacity during television interviews and on social media.

Federal law prohibits executive branch employees from using their official authority or influ-



J. SCOTT APPELWITTE/AP

A nameplate for presidential counselor Kellyanne Conway sits on the witness table Wednesday as the panel votes to subpoena her for not appearing on allegations that she repeatedly violated the Hatch Act.

ence to affect the result of an election. Trump and Vice President Mike Pence are exempt from the Hatch Act, but there are no exceptions for White House employees.

Republicans said Democrats were trying to curb Conway's free speech.

Conway, a frequent presence on radio and TV, is being "targeted because she is good at what she does," said Ohio Rep. Jim Jordan, the panel's senior Republican.

Instead of focusing on issues that matter to Americans, Democrats "want to focus on Kellyanne's tweets," Jordan said, noting that senior advisers to former President Barack Obama also frequently appeared on TV

and offered opinions on political matters.

Special Counsel Henry Kerner, a Trump appointee, said the Hatch Act's restrictions on political activity were reasonable. Without the law, partisan actions by government employees "could quickly multiply and severely damage the public's confidence in the nonpartisan operation of government," he said.

Referring to Conway, Kerner said her "egregious and repeated Hatch Act violations, combined with her unrepentant attitude, are unacceptable from any federal employee, let alone one in such a prominent position."

Conway's conduct "hurts both

federal employees, who may believe that senior officials can act with complete disregard for the Hatch Act, and the American people, who may question the nonpartisan operation of their government," Kerner said.

The agency does not have the authority to fire Conway, so it would be up to the president to follow Kerner's June 13 recommendation that she be dismissed. The recommendation marks the first time the watchdog office has recommended removal of a White House official over Hatch Act violations.

Trump has said he will not fire Conway, one of his most unwavering defenders.

NATION

Oregon's climate fight bares rural and urban divide

By GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — The divide in Oregon between the state's liberal cities and its conservative and economically depressed rural areas has made it fertile ground for the political crisis unfolding over a push by Democrats to enact sweeping climate legislation.

Eleven Republican senators were in the seventh day of a walk-out Wednesday to deny the supermajority Democrats the number of lawmakers needed to vote on a cap and trade bill, which would be the second of its kind in the U.S. The stalemate has drawn international attention, in part because right-wing militias have rallied to the GOP cause.

One Republican lawmaker said

state troopers dispatched to hunt down the striking lawmakers should "come heavily armed" if they want to bring him back to the Capitol.

"This is not the Oregon way and cannot be rewarded," Democratic Gov. Kate Brown said. "The Republicans are driving us away from the values that Oregonians hold dear, and are moving us dangerously close to the self-serving stalemate in Washington, D.C."

Experts say the standoff was inevitable given the state's political makeup.

Oregon has a national reputation as a liberal bastion best known for its craft beer, doughnuts and award-winning wine. But while its cities lean left, about 40% of residents — mostly those in rural areas — consistently vote Republican, said Priscilla



STEVEN DUBOIS/AP

People demonstrating to raise awareness of climate change in downtown Portland, Ore., on June 21, highlights a divide between Oregon's urban and rural areas.

Southwell, a University of Oregon professor who wrote "Governing Oregon."

"The reality is that it is a much more divided state than people realize," she said. "It's kind of like a perfect storm for this kind of thing to happen."

That political divide also translates to an economic chasm for many. As Portland has boomed, huge swaths of the state have been left without enough money to keep libraries open or fully staff sheriff's departments.

Logging, which once thrived, has been significantly reduced

because of environmental restrictions and a changing global economy. Rural voters worry the climate legislation would be the end for logging and trucking.

"It's going to ruin so many lives; it's going to put so many people out of work," said Bridger Hasbrouck, a self-employed logger from Dallas, Ore. "If the guys that I'm cutting for can't afford to run their logging companies, then I have to figure out something different."

The proposal would dramatically reduce greenhouse gases over 30 years by capping carbon

emissions and requiring businesses to buy or trade from an ever-dwindling pool of pollution "allowances."

Democrats say the legislation is critical to make Oregon a leader in the fight against climate change and will ultimately create jobs and transform the economy.

Republicans say it will kill jobs, raise the cost of fuel and other goods and gut small businesses. They also say they've been left out of policy negotiations, an assertion the governor called "hogwash."

German tourists run over, killed at swimming hole in Washington

By GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press

WASHOUGAL, Wash. — Two German tourists visiting family in nearby Portland, Ore., were run over and killed by a local man as they sunbathed by a swimming hole, police in Washington state said Wednesday.

Police arrested David Crosswell, 71, of Washougal, Wash., and held him on suspicion of vehicular homicide while driving under the influence of intoxicants and hit-and-run driving that caused death.

Killed were Rudolf Hohstadt, 61, and Regina Hohstadt, 62, of Germany. The pair had arrived in the United States a few days ago

to visit the Portland metropolitan area and took a trip to the Washougal River, police said. The river in southwest Washington is about a 30-minute drive from Portland.

A note on the gate at Crosswell's home Wednesday said the family would not comment and asked reporters to leave the property.

Authorities say Crosswell told them he had been drinking at a local restaurant Tuesday before the crash. Court documents show a preliminary breath test taken nearly four hours after crash found he had a blood-alcohol level of 0.085. In Washington, a blood alcohol level of 0.08 or greater is considered evidence of drunken driving.

He made a first court appear-

ance Wednesday morning, where bail was set at \$500,000. He will be arraigned July 10.

The Columbian newspaper reports that Crosswell's court-appointed attorney, Shon Bogar, said Crosswell is a lifelong Washougal resident. Bogar said his client has medical problems, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Bogar asked the judge to set a more reasonable bail amount.

In a statement, police said Crosswell didn't stop or slow down after crashing through a fence. He tore down a steep embankment to the sunbathing area, turned hard to the left, ran over the victims and then circled up a berm, knocked over a sign and



ALISHA JUCEVIC/The Columbian via AP

David Crosswell, who's accused of striking and killing two German tourists Tuesday, makes a first appearance in court Wednesday, in Vancouver, Wash.

left through the other side of the parking lot.

He was arrested several miles away, police said.

2 more Fla. deputies fired for inaction in Parkland

By CURT ANDERSON
Associated Press

MIAMI — Two additional deputies have been fired as a result of an internal affairs investigation into the response to the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland that killed 17 people, the Broward County sheriff said Wednesday.

At a brief news conference, Sheriff Gregory Tony said deputies Edward Eason and Josh Stambaugh were fired Tuesday for their inaction following the Feb. 14, 2018, shooting.

A state investigative commission found that Stambaugh was working an off-duty shift at a nearby school when he responded to reports of shots fired at the school. He got out of his truck, put on his bulletproof vest and took cover for about five minutes after hearing the shots, according to body camera footage. He then drove to a nearby highway instead of going toward the school.

Eason ran the other way as gunfire continued, then spent time putting on his bulletproof vest and body camera while the carnage continued, investigators said.

Eason was also faulted for not writing an official report after receiving a tip in February 2016 that the shooting suspect, Nikolas Cruz, was making threats on social media to shoot up a school.

Famous chef cleared in pregnancy discrimination trial

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — A jury in Napa Valley cleared the Thomas Keller Restaurant Group of wrongdoing in a pregnancy discrimination trial that ended Wednesday.

The verdict exonerates the famous chef and his acclaimed restaurants — Per Se in New York and the French Laundry in California — of charges of fraud and discrimination alleged by former employee Vanessa Scott-Allen.

"We are and always have been supportive of women and their

families," the French Laundry said in a statement. "We are disappointed to see lawyers seeking an exorbitant sum for erroneous claims, and believe that these types of frivolous cases do a disservice to the very cause they are meant to further."

Scott-Allen, 28, worked at Per Se for five years and rose to the highest server position of captain before requesting a transfer to the Napa Valley restaurant. According to her lawsuit, Scott-Allen said the transfer was approved and she moved to California where she was told they couldn't

offer her the job. In the interim, she had told her bosses she was pregnant.

During a three-week trial, Scott-Allen's attorneys presented internal emails and other documents they said showed managers learned about Scott-Allen's pregnancy and then devised an elaborate scheme to get rid of her that included tricking her into resigning from Per Se while leading her to believe she had a job waiting at the French Laundry.

Scott-Allen was seeking more than \$1 million in damages. Keller was named as an individu-

al defendant because he owns and controls the two restaurants.

Carla Minnard, an attorney for Scott-Allen, said they planned to appeal.

Defense attorneys offered a different account, saying Scott-Allen didn't get the job for performance reasons. During the trial, lawyers representing the Keller group said that French Laundry manager Michael Minnillo, who was also named in the lawsuit, had worked with Scott-Allen at Per Se and didn't think highly of her, and that he never extended a formal job offer to her.

NATION

NASA preps to open moon rock samples

By MARCIA DUNN
Associated Press

HOUSTON — Inside a locked vault at Johnson Space Center is treasure few have seen and fewer have touched.

The restricted lab is home to hundreds of pounds of moon rocks collected by Apollo astronauts close to a half-century ago. And for the first time in decades, NASA is about to open some of the pristine samples and let geologists take a crack at them with 21st-century technology.

What better way to mark this summer's 50th anniversary of humanity's first footsteps on the moon than by sharing a bit of the lunar loot.

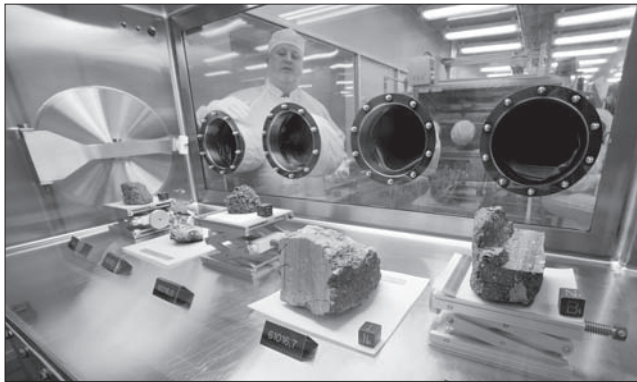
"It's sort of a coincidence that we're opening them in the year of the anniversary," said NASA's Apollo sample curator Ryan Zeigler, covered head to toe in a white protective suit with matching fabric boots, gloves and hat. "But certainly the anniversary increased the awareness and the fact that we're going back to the moon."

With the golden anniversary of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin's feat fast approaching — their lunar module Eagle landed July 20, 1969, on the Sea of Tranquility — the moon is red hot again.

After decades of flip-flopping between the moon and Mars as the next big astronaut destination, NASA aims to put astronauts on the lunar surface again by 2024 at the White House's direction. President Donald Trump prefers talking up Mars. But the consensus is that the moon is a crucial proving ground given its relative proximity to home — 240,000 miles, or two to three days away.

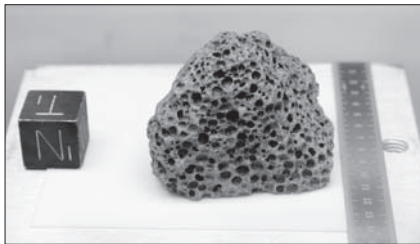
Zeigler's job is to preserve what the 12 moonwalkers brought back from 1969 through 1972 — lunar samples totaling 842 pounds — and ensure scientists get the best possible samples for study.

Some of the soil and bits of rock were vacuum-packed on the moon — and never exposed to Earth's atmosphere — or frozen or stored in gaseous helium following splashdown and then left untouched. The lab's staff is now



MICHAEL WYKE/AP

Above: Apollo sample curator Ryan Zeigler, left, stands next to a nitrogen-filled case displaying lunar samples collected during Apollo missions 15, 16 and 17 at the NASA Johnson Space Center on Monday in Houston. **Below:** A 3.5 billion-year-old basalt rock from Apollo 15 is shown.



trying to figure out how best to remove the samples from their tubes and other containers without contaminating or spoiling anything. They're practicing with mock-up equipment and pretend lunar dirt.

Compared with Apollo-era tech, today's science instruments are much more sensitive, Zeigler noted.

"We can do more with a milligram than we could do with a

gram back then. So it was really good planning on their part to wait," he said.

The lunar sample lab has two side-by-side vaults: one for rocks still in straight-from-the-moon condition and a smaller vault for samples previously loaned out for study. About 70% of the original haul is in the pristine sample vault, which has two combinations and takes two people to unlock. About 15% is in safekeeping

at White Sands in New Mexico. The rest is used for research or display.

Of the six manned moon landings, Apollo 11 yielded the fewest lunar samples: 48 pounds. It was the first landing by astronauts and NASA wanted to minimize their on-the-moon time and risk. What's left from that mission — about three-quarters after scientific study, public displays and goodwill gifts to all countries and U.S. states in 1969 — is kept mostly here at room temperature.

Armstrong was the primary rock collector and photographer. Aldrin gathered two core samples just beneath the surface during the 2½-hour moonwalk.

All five subsequent Apollo moon landings had longer stays. The last three — Apollo 15, 16 and 17 — had rovers that significantly upped the sample collection and coverage area.

"Fifty years later, we're still learning new things ... incredible," said the lab's Charis Kryshner, holding a clear acrylic marble embedded with chips of Apollo 11

moon rock in her gloved hand.

By studying the Apollo moon rocks, Zeigler said, scientists have determined the ages of the surfaces of Mars and Mercury, and established that Jupiter and the solar system's other big outer planets likely formed closer to the sun and later migrated outward.

"So sample return from outer space is really powerful about learning about the whole solar system," he said.

Andrea Mosie, who's worked with the Apollo moon rocks for 44 years and was a high school intern at Johnson Space Center in July 1969, remembers the Polaroid photos and handwritten notes once accompanying each sample. She sometimes gets emotional when talking to children about the moonshots and does her best to dispel any notion that the rocks aren't from the moon and the lunar landings never happened.

"The samples are right here and they're still in a pristine state," she assures young skeptics.

Most of the samples to be doled out over the next year were collected in 1972 during Apollo 17, the final moonshot and the only one to include a geologist, Harrison Schmitt. He occasionally visits the lunar sample lab and plans to help open the fresh specimens.

The nine U.S. research teams selected by NASA will receive varying amounts.

"Everything from the weight of a paperclip, down to basically so little mass you can barely measure it," Zeigler said.

Especially tricky will be extracting the gases that were trapped in the vacuum-sealed sample tubes. The lab hasn't opened one since the 1970s.

"If you go off that part up, the gas is gone. You only get one shot," Zeigler said.

The lab's collection is divided by mission, with each lunar landing getting its own cabinet with built-in gloves and stacks of stainless steel bins filled with pieces of the moon. Apollo 16 and 17, responsible for half the lunar haul, get two cabinets apiece.

The total Apollo inventory now exceeds 100,000 samples.

Largest oil refinery on East Coast will close after fire

Associated Press

The owner of the largest oil refinery complex on the East Coast is telling officials that it will close the facility after a fire last week set off explosions and damaged equipment there.

Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney said in a statement Wednesday that Philadelphia Energy Solutions had informed him of its decision to shut down the facility in the next month. The more than 1,000 workers there will be affected, the mayor said.

The amount of gasoline that will be lost from the refinery is sizable, but it can easily be made up by imports from Europe or elsewhere, said Jonathan Aronson, research analyst at Cornerstone Macro.

"We're not expecting any major shocks to retail gasoline (prices)," Aronson said. Consumers are more likely to feel gasoline prices increase due to the price of crude oil, which has been rallying in recent days, he said.

The refinery has been an important source fueling transportation in the Northeast, which is situated far from Gulf Coast refineries, and "at least temporarily, it's going to require some logistical shifting that could come at a cost," said Kevin Book, managing director at Clearview Energy Partners.

Old oil refineries on the East Coast are not always the most sophisticated or cost-competitive, so the case for their economic survival has been pretty bleak for a long

time, Book said. "Refining in general is a tough business. But it's a lot tougher at one of these old, lower complexity facilities."

A Philadelphia Energy Solutions spokeswoman had not responded to a request for comment Wednesday morning. The company also has recently struggled financially.

The 150-year-old oil refining complex processes 335,000 barrels of crude oil daily, according to PES. The refinery turns the crude into gasoline, jet fuel, propane, home heating oil and other products.

It started as a bulk petroleum storage facility in 1866 and began refinery operations in 1870.

The company emerged from federal bankruptcy court last year after restruc-

turing its debt, leaving its majority ownership in the hands of investment banking firms Credit Suisse Asset Management and Bardin Hill.

Friday's fire at the complex broke out early in the morning, and video showed an enormous orange blast bursting into the sky.

It set off three explosions, felt miles away, as the fire flowed through a tangle of pipes carrying fuel across the complex, the company has said.

It happened at the Girard Point refinery, one of two at the PES complex in south Philadelphia.

The fire erupted in a tank containing a mix of butane and propane, a fire official said.

WORLD

In Japan for G-20, Trump eyes multi-front progress

By ZEKE MILLER
AND JONATHAN LEMIRE
Associated Press

OSAKA, Japan — President Donald Trump began his most consequential overseas trip of the year on Thursday with a warm dinner with the prime minister of Australia, a friendly opening act before the impending gauntlet of negotiations on international crises, trade wars and a growing global to-do list.

Trump landed in Osaka, Japan, for the annual Group of 20 summit amid a tropical cyclone that is predicted to turn into a typhoon — a possible metaphor for the four days of high-stakes diplomacy that lie ahead. As his reception bid heats up, Trump was eager to produce breakthroughs on a series of foreign policy challenges, including the showdown between the U.S. and Iran, a trade war with China, the threat of fresh election interference by Russia and stalled nuclear talks with North Korea.

As he faces mounting pressures to deliver results, the president began his battery of meetings with world leaders with a dinner with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

The two men traded praise in the moments of the meal that were open to reporters and Trump said

he would “like to” visit Australia later this year for the prestigious Presidents Cup golf tournament. When asked if his “America First” policies strained traditional alliances, Trump insisted that the two nations “worked together very closely” on trade issues.

“I can say very easily that we’ve been very good to our allies, we work with our allies, we take care of our allies,” Trump said. “I have inherited massive trade deficits with our allies. And we even help our allies militarily. So, we do look at ourselves and we look at ourselves I think more positively than ever before. But we also look at our allies.”

The agenda for his four days in Asia is as laden with hazards for the president as it is light on the ceremonial pomp that marked his recent state visits to Japan and the United Kingdom.

But White House officials are playing down prospects of specific accomplishments in what is the president’s third international trip in a month, even as Trump himself said his “competitors” from other nations: “That’s OK. We’re doing great. We’re doing better than any of them.”

The week was set up to deliver a remarkable split-screen dynamic in American politics. While Trump is in Asia, the Democrats vying to replace him next year

are holding their first primary debates. As Air Force One soared toward Japan, Trump delivered a succinct review on Twitter of part 1 of a two-night debate: “BORING!”

Later, the president, ever the media critic, repeatedly mocked NBC for an audio malfunction that briefly interrupted the proceedings.

His itinerary in Osaka includes sit-downs with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Turkey’s Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, all of whom have authoritarian tendencies, as well as disquieted allies including Germany’s Angela Merkel and more contented ones such as Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

The summit will be a test of both Trump’s go-it-alone style as well as his “America First” doctrine that has frustrated traditional allies over disputes on defense spending and trade and set the United States apart from global consensus on how to deal with international concerns like climate change and Iran’s nuclear program.

The president, who has shown little patience for the subtleties of global interactions and whose administration has struggled to grapple with simultaneous chal-



SUSAN WALSH/AP

President Donald Trump attends a dinner with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison in Osaka, Japan, on Thursday prior to the start of this week’s G20 summit.

lenges, left Washington days after pulling back from the brink of armed conflict with Iran and as he trades threats over its nuclear program and support for terrorist groups. With Iran threatening to breach uranium enrichment limits set in the 2015 nuclear accord as soon as Thursday, Trump will be asked to articulate his strategy for containing Iran to skeptical world leaders after pulling the U.S. from the deal last year.

Trump will also find himself face-to-face with Putin for the first time since special counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation ended without finding evidence that the Trump campaign criminally conspired with Russia during the 2016 election. It will also be their first meeting since their summit in Helsinki in July 2018, when Trump declined to side with U.S. intelligence agencies over Putin on the question of election

interference, leading to an uproar at home and abroad.

Trump told reporters as he left the White House that he expects a “very good conversation” with Putin but added that “what I say to him is none of your business.” His aides have grown worried that Trump may use the meeting to once again attack the Mueller probe, particularly since the special counsel now has a date to testify before Congress next month.

Last November, Trump canceled a planned meeting with Putin at the G-20 in Argentina after Russia seized two Ukrainian vessels and their crew in the Sea of Azov, but the continued detention of the crew members does not appear to be deterring the leaders from meeting this time.

Aside from Iran, the leaders are expected to discuss hot spots in Syria and Venezuela, as well as nuclear weapons.

S. Korean official says US, North are seeking to narrow differences

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — The U.S. and North Korea feel the need to resume diplomacy and are trying to narrow their differences for new summit talks, a top South Korean official said Wednesday.

Unification Minister Kim Yeon-chul told reporters in Seoul that the two adversaries need to continue building up trust following the failed talks between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in February.

“The lesson that the U.S. and North Korea can have from the Hanoi summit is they must not repeat a failure,” Kim told The Associated Press and six other news agencies during a roundtable interview on Wednesday.

After fears of war over the North’s provocative run of weapons tests in 2017, Washington and Pyongyang held a series of talks including two summits between Trump and Kim. The Hanoi summit broke down due to squabbling over U.S.-led sanctions on North Korea, but the two leaders re-

cently exchanged personal letters in an apparent effort to keep diplomacy alive.

Since the U.S.’s entrance to talks with the United States early last year, Kim Jong Un has sent Trump eight letters while Trump wrote him four letters, Kim Yeon-chul said. “The confidence between the leaders of North Korea and the U.S. is being maintained to some extent,” he said.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in said this week North Korean and U.S. officials are holding “behind-the-scenes talks” to arrange a third summit, though he and Kim Yeon-chul offered no details. Kim Yeon-chul echoed Moon’s position that the resumption of inter-Korean economic projects, held up by the sanctions imposed over North Korea’s nuclear and missile tests, could help induce further denuclearization steps from the North.

Kim Yeon-chul said that while the Iran and North Korea nuclear issues share some things in common, they should not be viewed in the same way because of what he called joint efforts by Washing-



ANH YOUNG-JOON/AP

South Korean Unification Minister Kim Yeon-chul wants the U.S. and North Korea to keep building up trust after their failed talks.

ton and Pyongyang to salvage the stalemated nuclear talks.

“Both North Korea and the United States feel some sort of need for negotiations and they are trying to make efforts together to bridge their differences on sticking points. So I wonder you should look at [the two issues] a bit differently,” he said in response to questions about Iran.

The unification minister is South Korea’s point man for inter-Korean relations.

N. Korea: South effort to guide Kim, Trump not helping relations

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea said Thursday that South Korea must stop trying to mediate between Pyongyang and Washington as it stepped up its pressure on the United States to work out new proposals to salvage deadlocked nuclear diplomacy.

The North Korean statement was an apparent continuation of its displeasure with Seoul and Washington over the stalled diplomacy. But there are no signs that North Korea would formally abandon talks anytime soon as an inter-Korean liaison office in North Korea remains operating and the North still talks about good relations between its leader, Kim Jong Un, and President Donald Trump. The statement came two days before Trump visits South Korea for two days.

There have been no public meetings between the U.S. and North Korea since the breakdown of the second summit between Trump and Kim in Vietnam in February. Kim returned home empty-handed after Trump re-

fused to provide him with sanctions relief in return for a limited denuclearization step.

The summit’s collapse was a blow to South Korean President Moon Jae-in, a liberal who shuttled between Washington and Pyongyang to facilitate talks between the countries to help find a diplomatic settlement of the North Korean nuclear crisis.

Talk of a revival of diplomacy has flared after Trump and Kim recently exchanged personal letters. Moon also said talks between the two Koreas have been underway through unspecified “various channels.”

On Thursday, Kwon Jong Gun, chief of the North Korean Foreign Ministry’s U.S. affairs department, said it will “never go through” South Korea again when it deals with the U.S. He also dismissed as false the comments by Moon and other South Korean officials that there are various exchanges and unofficial talks between the two Koreas.

“It’s better for the South Korean authorities to mind their own business at home,” Kwon said.

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WORLD

Hong Kong protesters rally again as Lam remains hidden

By KATIE TAM

Associated Press

HONG KONG — Protesters opposed to legislation they fear would reduce Hong Kong's judicial independence rallied outside the Justice Department on Thursday as the territory's leader remained out of public view for a second week.

A few hundred people staged a sit-in on the street in front of the Justice Department, demanding that Secretary for Justice Teresa Cheng Yeuk-wah withdraw the now-suspended bills and drop charges against protesters arrested after a June 12 demonstration that turned violent.

The action was the latest in a series of protests this month targeting police headquarters and government offices.

"Withdraw the evil bill, release the protesters. There were no riots, only a tyrannical government," protest leader Joshua Wong told the crowd.

Police briefly attempted to push the crowd back onto the sidewalk but eventually relented and permitted them to occupy the road. Some protesters took it upon themselves to direct traffic around the gathering.

Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam hasn't been seen in public since issuing a televised apology nearly two weeks ago for

mishandling the extradition legislation. Lawmaker Kwok Ka-ki, of the opposition Civic Party, suggested she request a long-term leave of absence.

Lam's push to pass the extradition bills prompted hundreds of thousands of people to fill Hong Kong's streets in protest marches earlier this month.

The proposed changes would have allowed suspects to be extradited from Hong Kong to mainland China for trial. Many fear the proposals would erode Hong Kong's judicial independence and the civil liberties the city was guaranteed after its handover from British rule in 1997.

Several thousand people joined



KIN CHEUNG/AP

Riot police confront protesters outside police headquarters in Hong Kong on Thursday as demonstrations related to now-suspended extradition legislation continue.

a rally Wednesday night that capped a daylong appeal to world leaders to take up the issue at this week's G-20 summit, which brings together the heads of China, the United States and others.

Beijing has strongly opposed any discussion of the issue at the summit, which starts Friday in Japan, saying Hong Kong matters

are an internal Chinese affair.

Following Wednesday night's rally, a large group of protesters besieged police headquarters for the second time in less than a week. They spray-painted slogans on the walls, threw eggs at the building and shouted insults at the police until well after midnight.

Italy's 'cannabis light' creates buzz; interior official vows crackdown

By ALESSIA MELCHIORRE

AND COLLEEN BARRY

Associated Press

ROME — It's been called the Italian "green gold rush." Mild, barely there marijuana dubbed "cannabis light" has put Italy on the international weed map, producing hundreds of stores that sell pot by the pouch and attention from investors banking the legalization of stronger stuff will follow.

The flourishing retail industry around cannabis light — weed so nonbuzz it's essentially the decaf coffee of marijuana — surfaced as an unintended by-product of a law meant to restore Italy as a top producer of industrial hemp.

Now, storefronts that peddle chemically ineffective hemp flowers in varieties such as "Chill Haus" and "Black Buddha" are getting blowback as some Italians fear will nip business in the bud.

Italy's highest court clouded

the climate four weeks ago by ruling it was illegal to market hemp-derived products that weren't "in practice devoid" of the power to provide a perceptible high.

Sporadic testing and customer reviews suggested cannabis light outlets sold weed that weak. The law-and-order interior minister nonetheless declared war on the shops with neon leaf logos last month, vowing to close them "street by street, shop by shop" nationwide.

"It is neither possible nor acceptable that in Italy there are 1,000 shops where there are drugs legally, in broad daylight. This is disgusting," said Matteo Salvini, who made keeping migrants out of Italy a primary focus after taking office a year ago.

Some business owners are ready to fight back. The owner of Green Planet in the southern city of Caserta chained himself to the fence around his locked shop this month after a raid in which

police seized 16 grams of cannabis light. Gioel Magini, the owner of a Cannabis Amsterdam Store franchise in Sanremo, proposed a class-action lawsuit to keep the shops open and their owners from

losing money.

Police raids in other cities have cannabis producers and sellers worried. They are waiting to see if the Supreme Court's full opinion, due by July 30, clarifies if

they have a green light to keep mining the gold rush until the novelty of cannabis light wears off or more liberal laws clear the way for heavier marijuana on store shelves.

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WORLD

Merkel is again seen shaking at event

Associated Press

BERLIN — German Chancellor Angela Merkel appeared unsteady and was seen shaking for the second time in just over a week at a ceremony in Berlin on Thursday.

The incident, which lasted around two minutes, occurred as Merkel stood alongside President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at an early morning indoor event where Germany's new justice minister was being formally appointed.

Merkel folded her arms across her chest while her body visibly shook, and was handed a glass of



Merkel

water but rejected it. She appeared fine when she arrived in parliament half an hour later.

Merkel was due to set off for Japan later Thursday for the annual summit of the Group of 20 global powers.

Her spokesman, Steffen Seibert, told news agency dpa that "everything is going ahead as planned. The chancellor is fine."

Merkel's office wouldn't comment on the cause or otherwise elaborate. It is not publicly known if Merkel has any health problems. German privacy laws are very strict on that type of information.

On June 18, Merkel's whole body shook as she stood outside in hot weather alongside Ukraine's president. Merkel said afterward that she was fine after drinking three glasses of water, which she "apparently needed."

Hot weather in Germany has continued this week, though outdoor temperatures in Berlin dropped significantly overnight after peaking at around 99 Fahrenheit on Wednesday.

Merkel, 64, has been German leader since 2005.

Last week, dpa reported that Merkel had previously been seen shaking under similar circumstances in the hot sun. It did not give a date for that incident, but said it was also ascribed to Merkel not drinking enough water.

However, the chancellor has a reputation for stamina garnered in years of late night domestic and European negotiating marathons.

On Wednesday, she was on her feet in public for around two hours — first answering lawmakers' questions in parliament, then giving a speech across town. There was no sign then of any health issues.

Merkel said last year that she won't seek a fifth term as chancellor and won't seek any other political job after her current term ends in 2021.

European, US envoys hold Iran talks

Associated Press

PARIS — The U.S. special envoy for Iran, Brian Hook, is meeting with top French, German and British diplomats in Paris for talks on the Persian Gulf crisis at a time when European powers are trying to seal the 2015 nuclear deal struck with Tehran.

European countries want to avoid a further escalation in tensions between the U.S. and Iran and are trying to persuade Iran not to leave the nuclear deal, which the U.S. pulled out of last year.

In Japan for this week's G-20 summit, French President Emmanuel Macron told reporters Thursday he hopes to persuade President Donald Trump to open talks with Iran and avoid a war



Kouji SASAHARA/AP

French President Emmanuel Macron, left, speaking alongside Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Tokyo on Wednesday, wants to help ease tensions between Iran and the U.S.

that would engulf the Middle East. Macron said he is trying to play the role of mediator to ease the tensions between the U.S. and Iran.

"There is no brief war," Ma-

cron warned. "We know when it's starting, but not when it's finishing."

The French president is to meet with Trump during a summit of the Group of 20 starting Friday in

Japan.

Iran has said it will exceed the nuclear deal's limit on its stockpiles of low-enriched uranium by Thursday, following the reimposition of U.S. sanctions.

On Wednesday, Iran's U.N. ambassador urged Britain, France and Germany to take "timely" practical steps to preserve the agreement, "which is now in critical condition."

The three are finalizing efforts to put in operation a complicated barter-type system known as INSTEX to keep up trade with Iran and avoid U.S. sanctions, as part of efforts to keep the nuclear deal alive. The countries, and three other European Union nations, on Wednesday strongly urged Iran to abide by the agreement and "refrain from escalatory steps."

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Residents bugged by rash-causing moths

ME BANGOR — Maine is in the midst of an especially bad year for prevalence of a species of moth that can cause an itchy rash in humans.

The browntail moth is an invasive European species that has been in Maine for decades. The hairs of their caterpillars cause the rash, and the species can also cause widespread tree defoliation.

The Bangor Daily News reported populations have been growing for the past several years, and they have been especially noticing this summer in the state's Midcoast region and elsewhere.

Delivery truck with prescription drugs taken

FL SARASOTA — Authorities said a delivery truck with prescription drugs was stolen outside a Florida pharmacy.

Sarasota police said the truck was stolen while the driver was inside making a delivery at a Walgreens.

Investigators said the truck was later found abandoned several blocks away and the drugs were missing. Authorities would not disclose the monetary value of the stolen drugs.

Huge wooden troll returns at new site

CO BRECKENRIDGE — A giant wooden troll is ready to greet fans again after being moved and rebuilt in a Colorado ski town.

The Summit Daily reported the 15-foot troll, named Isk Heartstone, returned in Breckenridge on Tuesday.

The new Trollstigen trail was created to access the site.

The troll, built by Danish artist Thomas Dambo, was originally assembled beside a trail last summer for a festival, but it was dismantled in November after nearby homeowners complained about the crowds.

Postal service says old stolen mail found

HI HONOLULU — The U.S. Postal Service said it has found mail stolen in Hawaii more than a decade ago.

KHON-TV reported that the family of a now-deceased postal worker discovered the stolen mail inside a storage unit and turned the mail over to officials.

The mail dates back about 13 to 15 years ago.

The stolen mail was mostly First-Class and Priority Mail and newspapers and magazines.

Officials haven't identified the postal worker or his or her route.

K-9 recovering from stabbing during chase

MS BAY ST. LOUIS — Authorities said a police K-9 is recovering after being stabbed while chasing a suspect through a wooded area in Mississippi.



MATT ROURKE/AP

Dinosaur wranglers

Workers install a Spinosaurus model ahead of the exhibit Dinosaurs Around the World at The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University in Philadelphia on Wednesday. The exhibit is scheduled to run from Sunday to Jan. 20.

WLOX-TV reported the dog named Loco underwent surgery after being injured in Hancock County on June 18. Loco's veterinarian said the dog needed at least 100 stitches. He is expected to make a full recovery.

Jeremy Mitchell, 30, is accused of stabbing Loco. Mitchell is charged with aggravated assault on a law enforcement officer and other charges.

Man fleeing trooper plunges into lake

WA SEATTLE — The Washington State Patrol said a person fleeing a trooper jumped off the 520 bridge near Seattle into Lake Washington.

KOMO-TV reported a state trooper had stopped to help the driver of a vehicle that became disabled about halfway across the bridge when a license plate check revealed that the vehicle was stolen.

The state patrol said as the driver realized he might be arrested, he ran and tried to jump from one bridge span to the other, not realizing there is a large space between them. Officials said he fell about 60 feet into the water.

A harbor patrol boat crew pulled him from the water.

Woman tries to escape by swimming across river

MO COLUMBIA — Authorities said a Co-

THE CENSUS

60

The number of roosters, hens and chicks rescued from a Spencer, Ind., home that were apparently being raised as part of a cockfighting operation. The Owen County Sheriff's Office found birds that had physical features consistent with cockfighting. Investigators also reportedly found methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia. A man and a woman who live at the home were arrested. The seized birds are being cared for until a court determines what should happen to them.

lumbia woman was arrested after allegedly swimming across Lamine River to escape capture.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reported that Jasmine Bronger, 25, initially took off while deputies were arresting a 55-year-old Sedalia man on outstanding warrants.

Police said she was arrested on an outstanding Boone County burglary and theft warrant after she was spotted walking toward a home.

Prosecutor: Oxycodone shipped in stuffed toys

PA NORRISTOWN — Prosecutors said more than a dozen people were arrested in a ring they allege mailed Oxycodone pills concealed in toy teddy bears and rabbits from California to suburban Philadelphia for sale by drug dealers.

The Montgomery County district attorney's office said 13 people were arrested and three more are being sought on various charges related to drug trafficking, firearms trafficking and

forgery.

Authorities allege the group also dealt in illegal firearm sales, marijuana and other drugs.

27-foot long sinkhole continues to grow

NC ASHEVILLE — A 27-foot-long and 20-foot-deep sinkhole continues to expand in a North Carolina parking lot.

The sinkhole is about half the size of a tractor-trailer and about as deep as a giraffe's height — and it's growing.

Asheville firefighters responded to the scene but said they can't do anything unless the sinkhole presents a clear public danger, such as gobbling up a truck.

Usually sinkholes on private land are the owner's responsibility, even if the city's aging public infrastructure is to blame. City spokeswoman Ashley Traynum-Carson said Asheville is working to issue permits for emergency repairs.

It is unclear who would pay the bill.

Police seek person who threw kittens from car

NJ TOMS RIVER — Police in New Jersey are seeking the person who threw two kittens from a vehicle.

Toms River police posted on Facebook that witnesses observed a passenger in the vehicle toss the kittens onto Route 70. One of the kittens was struck and killed by another vehicle.

The second kitten was rescued but ran off into the woods and has not been found.

Lawmakers may bar Mickey from elections

RI PROVIDENCE — Sorry Mickey Mouse, Bugs Bunny and other fictional characters and celebrities who have received write-in votes in a Rhode Island election.

Some state lawmakers don't want those ballots to count.

The Providence Journal reported that the House Judiciary Committee approved legislation requiring people who want to be write-in candidates to file a notice of their intent no later than the Friday before an election.

Write-ins are a way for voters to express their displeasure with the official candidates. Mickey Mouse got 309 write-in votes in state elections in 2018.

From wire reports

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Stay connected and hey, welcome to the neighborhood.

BUSINESS/WEATHER

New software glitch found in Boeing 737 Max

By DAVID KOENIG
Associated Press

A new software problem has been found in the troubled Boeing 737 Max that could push the plane's nose down automatically, and fixing the flaw is almost certain to further delay the plane's return to flying after two deadly crashes.

Boeing said Wednesday that the FAA "identified an additional requirement" for software changes that the aircraft manufacturer has been working on for eight months, since shortly after the first crash.

"Boeing agrees with the FAA's decision and request, and is working on the required software to address the FAA's request," Boeing said in a statement.

Government test pilots trying out Boeing's updated Max software in a flight simulator last week found a flaw that could result in the plane's nose pitching down, according to two people familiar with the matter. In both Max crashes, the plane's flight control software pushed the nose down based on faulty readings from one sensor.

The people said fixing the issue might be accomplished through software changes or by replacing



TED S. WARREN/AP

A new software problem found in the Boeing 737 Max, one of which is shown here in production in Renton, Wash., in 2015, may further delay the plane's return to flying.

a microprocessor in the plane's flight control system. One said the latest setback is likely to delay the plane's return to service by an extra one to three months. Both spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss aspects of the review process that are not public.

In a statement, the Federal Aviation Administration said it will lift its grounding of the plane only when it deems the jet safe — there is no set timeline.

"On the most recent issue,

the FAA's process is designed to discover and highlight potential risks. The FAA recently found a potential risk that Boeing must mitigate," the agency said.

The Max began passenger flights in 2017 and is Boeing's best-selling plane, although fewer than 400 have been delivered to airlines.

A Max flown by Indonesia's Lion Air crashed in October, and an Ethiopian Airlines Max crashed in March. In all, 346

people died. Days after the second crash, regulators around the world grounded the plane.

Boeing is scaling back the power of flight control software called MCAS to push the nose down. It is also linking the software's nose-down command to two sensors on each plane instead of relying on just one in the original design.

It is still uncertain what kind of training pilots will get for flying the plane with the new software

— either computer-based or in-flight simulators.

Meanwhile, some airlines that own Max jets have had to cancel large numbers of flights while the planes remain grounded.

On Wednesday, United Airlines pushed back the scheduled return of its 14 Max jets until September. Southwest Airlines and American Airlines had already made similar announcements — an acknowledgment that the plane won't return to flying as soon as the airlines had hoped.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (June 28)	\$1.1658
Dollar buys (June 28)	€0.8578
British pound (June 28)	\$1.30
Japanese yen (June 28)	105.00
South Korean won (June 28)	1,126.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3769
British pound	\$1.2682
Canada (Dollar)	1.3122
China (Yuan)	6.8771
Denmark (Krone)	6.5713
Egypt (Pound)	16.6992
Euro	\$1.1358/0.8804
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8136
Hungary (Forint)	255.14
Israel (Shekel)	3.5809
Japan (Yen)	107.91
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3035
Norway (Krone)	8.5253
Philippines (Peso)	51.00
Poland (Zloty)	3.75
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7502
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3537
South Korea (Won)	1,156.51
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9778
Thailand (Baht)	30.80
Turkey (Lira)	6.7720

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.50
Discount rate	3.00
Federal funds market rate	2.38
3-month bill	2.10
30-year bond	2.56

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Germany	\$3.920	\$3.317	\$3.566	\$3.309
Change in price	-1.6 cents	-2.8 cents	-3.6 cents	-2.7 cents
Netherlands	--	\$3.804	\$4.020	\$3.925
Change in price	--	+1.2 cents	+1.5 cents	+8.6 cents
U.K.	--	\$3.251	\$3.500	\$3.243
Change in price	--	-2.8 cents	-2.6 cents	-2.7 cents
Azores	--	--	\$3.487	--
Change in price	--	--	-2.6 cents	--
Belgium	--	\$3.279	\$3.570	\$3.352
Change in price	--	No change	No change	No change
Turkey	--	--	\$3.383	\$3.126*
Change in price	--	--	-2.6 cents	-2.7 cents

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

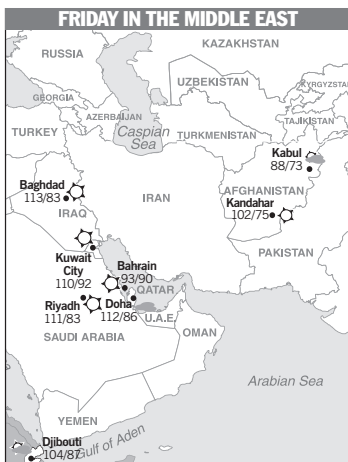
Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Japan	--	\$3.349	--	\$3.099
Change in price	--	-3.0 cents	--	-2.0 cents
Okunawa	\$2.709	--	--	\$3.099
Change in price	-1.0 cents	--	--	-2.0 cents
South Korea	\$2.739	--	\$3.379	\$3.129
Change in price	-1.0 cents	--	-3.0 cents	-2.0 cents
Guam	\$2.719**	\$3.119	\$3.359	--
Change in price	-1.0 cents	-2.0 cents	-3.0 cents	--

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For the week of June 28-July 4

MARKET WATCH

	June 26, 2019
Dow Jones Industrial	-11.40
	26,536.82
Nasdaq composite	25.25
	7,909.97
Standard & Poor's 500	-3.60
	2,913.78
Russell 2000	-3.26
	1,517.78

WEATHER OUTLOOK



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

WEEKEND



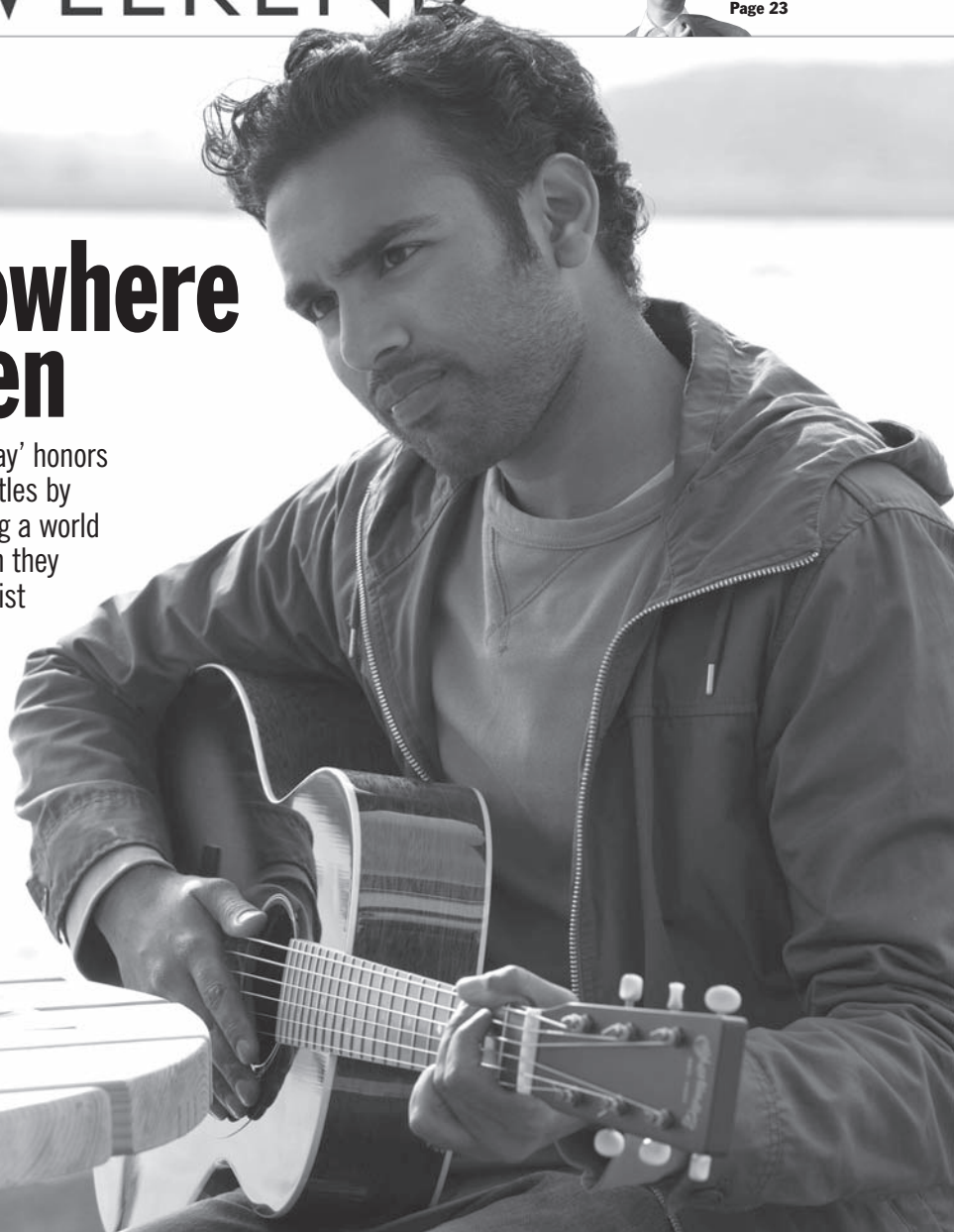
'Napoleon Dynamite'
celebrates 15 years

Page 23

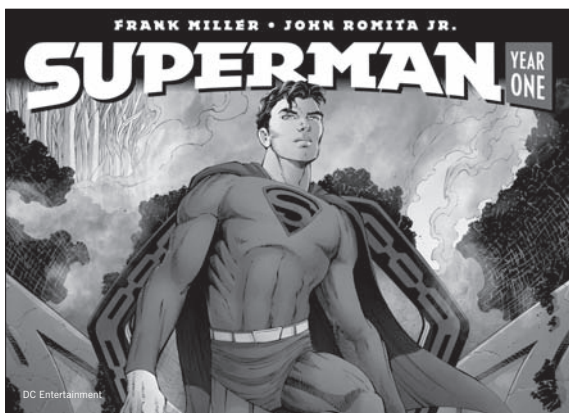
Nowhere men

'Yesterday' honors
the Beatles by
exploring a world
in which they
don't exist

Movies,
Page 24



WEEKEND: GADGETS



‘Year One’ reimagines Superman as Navy SEAL

By DAVID BETANCOURT
The Washington Post

You could forgive comic-book readers for thinking Frank Miller favored Batman over Superman.

Miller wrote two of the Dark Knight’s most definitive tales of the ‘80s: 1986’s “The Dark Knight Returns” (which he also illustrated) about a battle-worn, older Batman, and 1987’s “Batman: Year One” (with artist David Mazzucchelli), which was a look at Bruce Wayne’s rookie year under the cowl.

In “The Dark Knight Returns,” Miller’s aged and armored Caped Crusader delivers bloody blows with his fists and spiked boots to the jaw of a Superman serving as a by-the-book antagonist. On the 30th anniversary of the graphic novel, Miller told The Washington Post that it was a fight he enjoyed crafting.

But Miller also says that the Superman in “The Dark Knight Returns” was the one he needed for that story, and never represented how he felt about the DC icon overall.

Far from it, in fact. As Miller, 62, puts it, Superman was a childhood favorite and the reason he got into comics in the first place, thanks to many viewings as a 5-year-old of Max Fleischer’s animated series.

So when DC Comics co-publisher Dan DiDio told Miller he wanted him to write a new “Year One” coming-of-age story for DC’s new Black Label imprint featuring the Man of Steel, Miller couldn’t wait to get started.

“It was just jumping up and down saying, ‘I thought you’d never ask,’” he said.

“Superman: Year One,” written by Miller and illustrated by his longtime collaborator John Romita Jr., is a three-issue miniseries that the duo uses to explore Clark Kent’s journey from alien baby to the world’s greatest superhero.

“This is me really embracing a character I’ve always loved,” Miller said of the project, which debuted June 19 in print and digitally. “In ‘Batman (Year One), I felt like I was filling in a large empty space that was only covered by a couple of panels in the (original) origin story. In (this) one, (it) is really quite the opposite. It’s like ... sorting out the stuff that’s actually relevant and turning it into a study of who (Superman) is. Batman is a guy you can sum up really quickly, but Superman’s more complex.”

The first issue of “Superman: Year One” sees a young Clark juggling the social caste systems of high school; dodging bullies without revealing his super-strength; scoring touchdowns on defense for the football team while trying to keep the promise to his adoptive parents to not show off too much; and realizing the mutual admiration in the air for his forever first love, fellow classmate Lana Lang.

There are first kisses, first fights and first flights.

But Miller says this Superman adventure isn’t meant to start off as pure teen drama. It’s the story of an outsider becoming one with the world he was never intended to be a part of.

“I want to portray Superman as the ultimate immigrant,” he said. “That’s part of why he’s so much part of the American Dream. He travels like Moses from outer space, and he goes up and down and falls in love with the right things about America because they are new to him. And he’s a representation of that.”

Part of the book that stands out from many other iterations of Superman’s origin story is Clark’s decision to join the Navy and train with the Navy SEALs.

“(Clark learns) that he could be a killing machine,” Miller said. “The combination of all of the military training and the lessons from his parents and his upbringing brings on his conviction that he is not a killer.”

DiDio says publishing “Superman: Year One” under Black Label, which at times includes large-page formats and longer stories (the first issue is 64 pages, compared with the standard 22), allows star talent such as Miller and Romita to tell stories featuring classic characters and push boundaries without being weighed down by continuity.

“What Frank did was find a different lens to tell (Superman’s story) through,” DiDio said. “(Artistically) I think this is some of the best work John Romita Jr. has done here at DC.”

Romita, 62, has one of the most distinctively recognizable, at times equally admired and reviled illustration styles around. He illustrated all 190 pages for “Year One,” but he’s come to expect heavy workloads whenever he draws for Miller, ever since their days working on “Daredevil” at Marvel.

“(There’s) something about Frank and me and a lot of pages,” he joked.

GADGET WATCH

Honeywell’s smart thermostat knows when owner comes home

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

Honeywell Home T9 thermostats are a game-changer for anyone with a house.

Honeywell gave me a demonstration of the system at this year’s Consumer Electronics Show in January. Instantly I knew that the sensor would be perfect for my house. And Honeywell representatives stressed how easy the installation is.

Like most homes, one of my thermostats is in a convenient centralized hallway and works great to modulate the temperature there. But what doesn’t work great is getting a consistent temperature in other parts of the house also controlled by that thermostat.

Sensors are placed in rooms that need more temperature control. During setup, interactions will walk you through a simple process for all your sensors.

I’m not qualified to do much in the realm of home repair, but I could manage this installation process. All I had to do was read instructions, take a picture of the existing thermostat’s wiring and then follow colors, numbers and instructions to hook up the new one.

For those who are more adept, the instructions explain what to do if your system does not have a C-wire. My system already had one connected, otherwise, you’ll need a C-wire adapter, which is also simple to install.

It all took less than 15 minutes, including marking and drilling holes for the included hardware to hang the wiring plate, filling the older holes to cover up the previous rounded thermostat and then snapping the new wiring plate and the display together.

And importantly, as instructed, I shut off the power circuit for this area of my house before the installation began.

Instantly after the T9 was powered up, onscreen instructions walked me through the few steps to connect the T9 to my existing Wi-Fi system and smartphone.

With the connection, the rectangular-shaped thermostat display and settings are controlled from the display or on your smartphone or tablet with the free accompanying Honeywell app.

While it’s easy to set up schedules for when the air is on or off along with automatic settings, your schedule also changes. For example, if your AC is supposed to go on to cool the house at 5 p.m. as the family begins to arrive home, but then plans change, it takes just a second to turn on the app and override the schedule. Now you’re saving money by not cooling an empty house.

Weekly or daily schedules can be made with specific hours, rooms, times and temperatures. Email notifications can be set up to alert you when a specific room (think baby’s room) reaches a specific high or low temperature.

The system allows up to 20 sensors to be connected per thermostat. In the settings, you can choose whether to have the temperature entirely controlled by a sensor, have it averaged out or even have a sensor turned on with motion. There’s no limit to how often the settings and controls can be changed.

A pair of AA batteries and 3M tape is included for installing and powering the sensors.

Geofencing is another great feature. When you have it activated, the system will know when you’re home or away. When returning to your home with geofencing, the thermostat will sense that your smartphone is within a certain radius and turn the heat or AC on. In reverse, it knows when you leave the area to turn it down to a specific energy target.

The Honeywell Home T9 works with Alexa and Google Assistant voice assistants along with IFTTT and Samsung SmartThings.

Online: honeywell.com; Honeywell Home T9 Wi-Fi Smart Thermostat with 1 Smart Room Sensor \$199, Single T9 Smart Sensor \$39.99 each or a two pack for \$74.99



HONEYWELL/TNS

ON THE COVER: Himesh Patel stars as the only person to remember the Beatles in “Yesterday.”

Universal Pictures/AP

The Honeywell Home T9 thermostat allows up to 20 sensors to be connected per thermostat throughout a home.

WEEKEND: MOVIES

BY LINDSAY WHITEHURST
Associated Press

The cult comedy "Napoleon Dynamite" turns 15 years old this month, a milestone for a movie that became an early breakaway hit in today's era of pop-culture geek celebration.

The movie created the "Vote for Pedro" T-shirt and made Napoleon's disgusted version of "gosh!" into a 2004 catchphrase.

Made for just \$400,000 by a group of recently graduated Brigham Young University film students, it ultimately grossed more than \$46 million after its June 2004 release. A word-of-mouth hit before Twitter and Facebook took off, it was part of a handful of independent comedies that took off in the early 2000s.

"Napoleon Dynamite" tells the story of its curly-headed, socially awkward title character who ultimately triumphs over the high school jocks and cheerleaders because of his quirks, rather than in spite of them.

Its success added to a rising profile for the world's unapologetic nerds at the beginning of a new wave of geek glory. "The Big Bang Theory" debuted a few years later and became television's top-rated sitcom, while comic book movies achieved box office dominance.

The husband and wife team of Jared and Jerusha Hess mined true-to-life oddball high school moments, from a musical sign language club to puffy-sleeved dresses for school dances. There were also nods to rural life in the tiny city of Preston, Idaho, like the much-quoted line drawn from Napoleon's mealtime call to the family llama: "Tina, you fat lard, come get some dinner."

The combination struck comedic gold. "I think the legacy of the movie is how original it is," said Glenn Williamson, an independent film producer and lecturer at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television. "I like to think something else like that would find an audience today, because I do think people respond to that authentic freshness."

Shot in just over three weeks, the movie made a splash at the Sundance Film Festival even though it was submitted before director Jared Hess thought it was ready. But producer Jeremy Coon said he knew they had something special from the first edit.

"All of us were starving students coming out of school. A lot was riding on it," said Coon, who borrowed the money to make the movie from his brother.

Fox Searchlight snapped it up for nearly \$5 million, a princely sum at the time.

It started off relatively small in theaters, but with clever marketing and word of mouth, people kept coming back. Nearly three months after its release, it was still earning just as much money per theater, said Bruce Nash, founder and publisher of The Numbers, a movie industry tracking website.

"You don't really see that today," he said. "The popularity kept up even as it went to DVD."

Most movies with similar longevity were meant to be serious awards contenders or were created by established

A VOTE
FOR NERD
CULTURE

15 years ago,
'Napoleon Dynamite'
helped to usher in
an unapologetic wave
of geek glory



Eren Ramirez as Pedro (left) and Jon Heder (right and far right) as the title character in the 2004 cult classic comedy "Napoleon Dynamite."

TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX AND PARAMOUNT PICTURES/AP

'I think
the legacy
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Glenn Williamson

Independent film producer
and lecturer at the UCLA School of
Theater, Film and Television

writers and directors, he said. They also tend to be dramas.

Among the few other comedies are "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," "Little Miss Sunshine" and "June," all also released in the early 2000s. While those were low budget by Hollywood standards, none were on a "Napoleon Dynamite"-level shoestring.

"It still really stands out even among the other films that had similar legs around the same time," Nash said.

It has a DIY aesthetic that reflects the way the movie was made: Napoleon's signature puffy snow boots were two decades old and borrowed from an uncle. Almost all the costumes came from thrift stores, and they gathered extras for big scenes with the promise of a hot-dog boil. His effervescent dance that wins the day at the movie's climax was mostly unchoreographed.

Jon Heder, who played Napoleon, went on to star with Will Ferrell in the comedy "Blades of Glory" in 2007 and in recent years has been doing TV and film voice work. The Hesses made "Nacho Libre" with Jack Black shortly after Napoleon Dynamite, and later Jerusha Hess directed the 2013 romantic comedy "Austenland." Tina Majorino had a comeback with her role as Deb, and the onetime child star has since appeared in shows ranging from "Veronica Mars" to "Grey's Anatomy."

The movie has also spawned a cartoon and, more recently, a comic book sequel. A "Vote for Pedro" shirt showed up on San Antonio Spurs head coach Gregg Popovich in 2016, and actors from the teen drama "Riverdale" donned Halloween costumes based on the movie last year.

Original fans of the picture are now old enough to have kids of their own, and it's the kind of movie most parents wouldn't blush at showing their kids, Coon said.

"We always made the film that made us laugh, it wasn't like we were setting out to make this movie for the masses," he said. "Hopefully as new fans are born and can find the film, it can grow from there."

WEEKEND: MOVIES



A unique tribute

'Yesterday' celebrates the Beatles by imagining a world without them

By PETER SLENDORIO
New York Daily News

It's a notion that would leave Beatles fans here, There and Everywhere crying out for Help!

A world without the transcendent songs of Paul McCartney, John Lennon, George Harrison and Ringo Starr seems almost impossible to imagine nearly six decades after the Fab Four changed music forever.

But that's the concept explored in "Yesterday," a new movie where everybody except one man forgets about the Beatles.

"In reality, if they didn't exist, the world would be an infinitely more different place and it's hard to really unravel that thread," star Himesh Patel, 28, said. "The aim of the movie is to use this conceit of them disappearing to kind of conversely celebrate how amazing their music is and how important it is in terms of its love. How the message of so many of the songs is love and friendship and celebration of what's best in people."

In the movie, Patel portrays a struggling musician named Jack Malik who gets hit by a bus during a sudden electrical blackout and wakes up as the only person who knows the Beatles.

Jack starts to pass off Beatles classics like "Let It Be" and "I Want to Hold Your Hand" as his own and is catapulted to international fame, while wrestling with guilt over taking credit for someone else's work.

The chance to honor the Beatles' legacy in such a unique way excited director Danny Boyle.

"It allows you to be both wonderfully respectful of the songs, and certainly in Himesh's performance you've got moments of real magic with him performing the songs, but it allows you to also be disrespectful to the songs, which is a very healthy thing," Boyle, 62, said. "He can't remember 'Eleanor Rigby.' They retile

one of the greatest songs ever written from 'Hey Jude' to 'Hey Dude.'"

Lily James, who stars as Jack's best friend Ellie, appreciates how "Yesterday" shows the Beatles would have been revolutionary no matter when they existed.

"It's such incredible songwriting that it would always cause a phenomenon," James, 30, said. "It would always be something that would be heralded as a huge musical moment in history because their songs, and what they wrote and how their music changed through the albums, and what they express ... that's obviously all timeless."

The makers of "Yesterday" got the rights to use Beatles songs, and Boyle says McCartney and Starr have been supportive of the movie. They sent the film to the music legends upon completion.

"We thought as a courtesy we should send it to them to show what we tried to do with these wonderful songs," Boyle said. "We got a wonderful letter back (from) Ringo. Very special, quite personal, very lovely."

The Oscar-winning director said they reached out to McCartney as a courtesy to ask about naming the movie "Yesterday" after his song.

"He was very funny," Boyle said. "He wrote back and said, 'Well, you know the original title of that song was 'Scrambled Eggs.' Maybe you should consider that.'"

Patel learned to play piano at a young age and taught himself to play guitar, though he says he "had to improve quite a bit for the movie."

He enjoyed putting his own twist on Beatles songs.

"It was just an organic process, really, of seeing how they sounded when I kind of played them my own way," Patel said.

Himesh Patel stars in "Yesterday."

UNIVERSAL PICTURES/TNS

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS



Warner Bros. Pictures

“Annabelle Comes Home,” the third film in the stand-alone trilogy, features the scary doll breaking out of paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren’s room of cursed and haunted objects and wreaking havoc on their daughter. Starring Vera Farmiga and Patrick Wilson (not pictured).

‘Annabelle Comes Home’: Good, scary summer fun

By MICHAEL O’SULLIVAN
The Washington Post

Artistically, it’s hard to sustain, let alone build on, a popular horror franchise. The cinematic Conjuring universe — an interconnected series of hit horror films that began with 2013’s “The Conjuring” — has been a critically mixed bag. (All the films have made money, but April’s “The Curse of La Llorona” had the worst opening weekend of the series.)

“The Conjuring 2?” Kind of meh. And that devil-doll spinoff “Annabelle” an utter stinker, only to be followed by what turned out to be a scary-good prequel: “Annabelle: Creation.” “The Nun” just felt like pandering: not terrible, but certainly not necessary.

Now there’s “Annabelle Comes Home,” the seventh Conjuring installment and the third in the stand-alone trilogy of films about a malevolent doll. If it’s not quite as good as the doll’s origin story, “Creation,” it’s still way more fun than any sequel — especially one this deep into a franchise — has any right to be.

The new movie opens on Ed and Lorraine Warren, characters based on real-life husband-and-wife consultants of demonology and witchcraft. Played by Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga, Ed and Lorraine reacquaint us with the title character in a short prologue that harks back to the opening scene of “The Conjuring.”

They remove the doll Annabelle from a home she had been terrorizing and relocate her to their “artifact room”: a deadbolted repository in their basement where they store objects that are haunted, cursed or just plain evil. Into a vitrine she goes — behind consecrated glass reclaimed from a demolished chapel — after a splash or two of holy water and some mumbled prayers by a Catholic priest.

And that should be that. Their young daughter, Judy (McKenna Grace), knows better than to mess with her parents’ things. Probably because there are signs all over the place.

But Mom and Dad are going out of town for a business trip, leaving Judy in the care of her hyper-responsible teenage babysitter Mary Ellen (Madison Iseman) and, without their knowledge, Mary Ellen’s not-so-responsible best friend, Daniela (Katie Sarife). You know those movies where the grown-ups are away and some adolescent troublemaker breaks into the liquor cabinet, invites a few too many friends over and almost trashes the house? That’s basically this movie — except instead of a crowd of rowdy teens, it’s an unholy horde of hellish fiends.

When Daniela sneaks into the artifact room, she accidentally unleashes a miscellany of horror-movie tropes, like none you have ever seen before — at least not all in the same movie. (Though in some ways, the movie reminds me of “It,” in which the shapeshifting boogeyman takes the form of your deepest fear.) In addition to the titular doll, who keeps materializing where you least expect her, “Annabelle Comes Home” features a laundry list of ghouls, goblins, ghosts and ghastly gadgets, including a werewolf, a bloody bride, various corpses, a haunted television set, a murderous samurai warrior, a gargoyle-like demon, a windup organ-grinder’s monkey and a super-creepy version of the old Milton Bradley game Peewee Meely. The film is set in the 1970s, and evokes that period nicely, by more than just its appropriate needle-drum soundtrack. It’s also surprisingly funny.

It does not, however, reinvent the genre. To be completely honest, most of the film’s best moments consist of simple jump scares and little else. But the connection to “It” is no coincidence. Writer-director Gary Dauberman, making his directorial debut here, co-wrote that 2017 film. The movie is scary, to be sure, but it’s also larky good fun. To quote King Harvest’s “Dancing in the Moonlight,” the 1973 hit song that plays, cheerfully if ironically, over the closing credits, it’s a supernatural delight.

“Annabelle Comes Home” is rated R for horror violence, terror and brief crude language. Running time: 106 minutes.



UNIVERSAL PICTURES/TNS

A solar flare causes everyone in the world to forget the Beatles, and a young musician (Himesh Patel) capitalizes on the amnesia in “Yesterday.” Co-starring Lily James.

‘Yesterday’ doesn’t quite come together

By KATH WALSCH
Tribune News Service

Danny Boyle and Richard Curtis’ “Yesterday” requires its viewers to take quite a few leaps of faith. First, you have to wholeheartedly buy into the rule that, categorically, the best songs ever written are by the Beatles. They’re great songs, to be sure. But in “Yesterday,” they are revelatory, tear-jerking, Best Songs Ever, no matter the context or who is singing them. It’s very high stakes, but then again, most everything about “Yesterday” is high stakes.

This heightened high-concept magical drama presents the idea that a weird electrical blip/solar flare causes electricity all over the world to go out, while simultaneously wiping our collective consciousness clean of all traces of the Beatles. Jack (Himesh Patel), a struggling pub musician and busker, is at that moment hit by a bus (thank goodness he’s wearing a helmet), totaling his teeth and his bike tire. But somehow, his memory of the Beatles remains magically intact. He discovers the quirk when, as a get-well gift, his pals get him a guitar. And because “a great guitar deserves a great song,” he plays a few bars of the Beatles’ “Yesterday,” absolutely flooring his friends, who wonder when and how he wrote the tune.

Jack’s the only person in the world who remembers the band (or so it seems). And so, through a series of jogs in the rain clutching his forehead, he ultimately decides to capitalize on it, sending his career into overdrive. His trajectory to the top is aided by Ed Sheeran, who is apparently now the world’s best songwriter (in this timeline, Oasis does not exist, but the Rolling Stones do), and his manager, Deborah (Kate McKinnon), hears Jack’s crooning and sees dollar signs.

Written by Jack Barth and Richard Curtis, the king of the British rom-com (“Love Actually,” “Four Weddings and Funeral,” “About Time”), “Yesterday” is a love story disguised as a high-concept music film. Jack has friend-zoned his best mate, Ellie (Lily James), and through the Beatles’ music and his journey to global superstardom and back, he learns what’s really important in life. But with Curtisian flair, Jack of course can’t just tell Ellie, he needs to make a grand gesture that puts her in a high-pressure situation: How about the Wembley Stadium Jumbotron for a declaration of love?

Everything in the film is high: concept, high pressure, high stakes, and it often feels bizarrely forced. Nothing makes any sense and is never explained. No one has any memory of Coca-Cola or cigarettes for some reason, either. The script wobbles underneath its own weight, but Boyle distracts from the issues with his feverish direction, characteristically throwing everything at the screen and bringing his signature sense of visual dynamism, filled with movement, light and color.

The songs? Great, of course. The story? Strange at best. The characters and aesthetic? Aces. Everyone on screen is just so likable (even McKinnon, playing the villain), especially the earnest, open Patel, in a star-making heartthrob turn featuring his crystal-clear singing voice. “Yesterday” is just so expertly directed by Boyle, and perfectly cast that it’s almost impossible not to like. (Joel Fry is a stand-out as Jack’s roadie.) Even if this modern fairy tale doesn’t hold up on close inspection, Boyle does his best to make sure the ride is enjoyable.

“Yesterday” is rated PG-13 for suggestive content and language. Running time: 116 minutes.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

E3 2019: 10 promising titles

By TODD MARTENS ■ Los Angeles Times

The flash and noise of this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo show floor was designed to sell rather than to encourage thought. Imagine the internet sprung to life, where a giant, futuristic fortress heralding an Avengers game was a head turn away from the Fortnite booth, which hosted a quiz show in which players stood behind platforms fashioned to look like llamas — which itself was near a digital corridor that flashed with fictional "wanted" ads from the Nazi-killing game Wolfenstein: Youngblood.

E3, held June 11-13 at the Los Angeles Convention Center, was designed to disorient and to get you to click "pre-order" before you come to your senses — or remember that the industry is struggling to navigate many hot-button issues, including the conditions of its own workforce.

But the joy of play can't be thwarted by massive marketing endeavors and carefully crafted media statements. Below, a look at 10 games that still managed to make a lasting impression amid the cacophony that was E3.

Beyond Blue (E-Line Media)

From the studio that published Never Alone comes an exploration adventure designed to showcase the intrigue and mystery of our oceans. Beyond Blue is being developed in conjunction with the BBC and the researchers behind its "Blue Planet II" series.

Players will command Mira as she takes a deep dive to learn more about our underwater environments. The oceans in Beyond Blue are vibrant and otherworldly. So while the effects of pollution and climate change are the theme, the E-Line team doesn't want to go on a soapbox, says E-Line executive Steve Zimmerman. "We want people to start thinking about the world beyond what they see," he says. "We know more about the surface of Mars than we do our oceans." No release date announced.

Blinks (Move38)

Not so much a game as a platform, Blinks takes its inspiration from tabletop games, abstract art and decades of digital games. A starter kit (\$99) comes with six blinks, little hexagonal blocks that can be pressed or tapped to display an array of colors. When touching, the cubic items interact, and tap commands can be used to bring to life one of six games.

Shown at E3 inside the IndieCade booth was Mortals, a strategy game in which players rearrange the shapes to drain the power from those belonging to another player. Or you can probably play alone; it's calming simply to watch the tiny hexagons display various colors as they try to speak to you via a language of lights. Expected release in late summer or fall.

Boyfriend Dungeon (Kitfox Games)

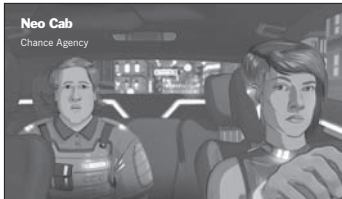
Battling monsters in your local neighborhood shopping center is just one of the metaphors of this game, which merges hack-and-slash duels with romance. Only here, your potential loved ones also morph into weapons, turning your dates into epic fights.

"It's a world that you could — despite the dating of swords thing — imagine yourself in," says Kitfox's Victoria Tran. "We were really tired of dystopian themes, so we wanted an aspirational world to be in, no matter your preferences in dating."

And if you're thinking it sounds too silly to feel real, if you're sick of the whole romantic love thing, there's also a feline that turns into brass knuckles. Cats, right? No release date announced.

Keen (Cat Nigiri)

The powerfully cute indie game stars a young woman, Kim, who trains under the tutelage of her grandmother to save her town from turning into a generic corporate playground.



Neo Cab
Chance Agency

The player will navigate chessboard-like rooms to take down robotic and zombie-like minions, all while making her brother clean up the mess. After all, if someone is saving the world, chances are there's someone with a broom behind her. "Keen," in development from Brazilian studio Cat Nigiri for most major platforms, is a smile-inducing game with cartoon-like charm. No release date announced.

Luigi's Mansion 3 (Next Level Games/Nintendo)

The third edition of the ghost-infested Luigi's Mansion series will be the first for Nintendo Switch. More exploration-based than the Super Mario Bros. series, here Luigi's pals are held hostage in a stacked, funhouse-style hotel, where some floors resemble medieval castles and others forests. Capture ghosts using a vacuum-like device, then hunt for elevator buttons to discover new floors. Like the best Nintendo games, it's completely senseless yet somehow totally logical. For instance, players can once again become Googly (introduced in the 3DS remake of the original), which is exactly what it sounds like — a Luigi made of goo. Watching Googly traverse spikes and break apart as he falls through grates is oddly pleasing, even if players will be wondering what Googly is made of and how he's able to live in and apart from Luigi. Expected release fall/winter 2019.

Manifold Garden (William Chyr Studio)

It's difficult for contemplative puzzle games to shine amid the mall-like atmosphere of E3, but the William Chyr-led Manifold Garden succeeds in distorting any sense of time and place. A bit dreamlike and slightly trippy — Chyr cites the film "Inception" as one of many influences — Manifold Garden, announced for home computers and PlayStation 4, has players unspooling the rules of



Luigi's Mansion 3
Nintendo

gravity to navigate a minimalist environment that takes its cues from the byzantine yet mathematical artwork of M.C. Escher.

The game has been in development since 2012, and as production nears the finish line, Chyr and his team have been building out the mysterious world, where falling is sometimes the only way to go up. "Originally, the world was to serve the puzzles," says Chyr. "In 2015, somebody pointed out that the game has too much manifold, not enough garden." Expected release fall/winter 2019.

Minecraft Earth (Mojang/Microsoft)

Since the release of Pokemon Go in 2016, many have waited for augmented reality to take over gaming. That hasn't really happened, as few AR attempts have captured people's imaginations. But that could change this year, with not only Minecraft Earth but also Niantic's follow-up to Pokemon Go in Harry Potter: Wizards Unite.

Minecraft Earth is essentially designed to encourage exploration. Sure, there will be opportunities to go on Minecraft adventures and virtually battle skeletons and other creatures out in physical spaces, but if users gravitate to the game, it should be one that fuels creativity by allowing players to integrate their own designs with very real infrastructure. "It harkens back to the way that physical play used to be," says Minecraft Earth art director Brad Shuber. No release date announced.

Neo Cab (Chance Agency)

Neo Cab was the most perfect demo I played at E3 this year, a game that is not just designed with the sort of simple choice-based interface that could be grasped by many but also calls attention to the mini emotional mind games that occupy — and wreak havoc on — our day.

Neo Cab dials into the anxieties surrounding our current social and economic climate, imagining a time when the haves and the have-nots are divided among those with jobs and those trapped in the gig-economy lifestyle championed by ride-share services such as Uber and Lyft. The game's core question: In an app-driven world that's making our daily life feel like a game, do "likes" and five-star ratings have anything to do with happiness, or are we all slowly making each other miserable? No release date announced.

Star Wars Jedi: Fallen Order (Respawn Entertainment)

It's been a rocky few years for major Star Wars video games under Electronic Arts' control. The launch of Battlefront II was marred by what was seen as predatory pay-to-play schemes, and a game from celebrated designer Amy Hennig (Uncharted) never made it to market. So expectations are high for local studio Respawn (Apex Legends) to deliver a powerful narrative with its third-person adventure game.

Respawn appears to be on the right track with a game set before the events of "A New Hope," a time when the lightsaber-wielding Jedi are hunted by the evil Empire. Featuring a largely new cast and a deep lightsaber-wielding combat system, Fallen Order has the opportunity to tell a darker story about more personal heroics (there's no Luke Skywalker here). A 30-minute playthrough contained plenty of lightsaber action but also opportunities to use the Force to control the environment. And a tiny petlike droid is adorable, giving the game a bit of the lighthearted levity that any good Star Wars work needs. Expected release Nov. 15.

Watch Dogs: Legion (Ubisoft)

This is the only game on this list I didn't get to play, but I include it here for its technological ambitions. In a near-future London, one in which increasingly isolationist policies have essentially created two classes — the powerful and the poor — players will attempt to bring about a revolution.

But here's where it gets interesting: Players will be able to recruit anyone seen in the game to sculpt their own citizen-based army. Creating that many playable characters is no easy feat, especially if they each have their own personalities, as promised. Equally intriguing is that to win someone over, players basically hack into their digital lives and find something they need, adding a theme of technological manipulation to this already political story.

"If someone's got a sister who's sick in the hospital, you could go prioritize her medical treatment and she'll be let out of the hospital and they'll both like you more," says Clint Hocking, the game's creative director. Expected release: March 2020.



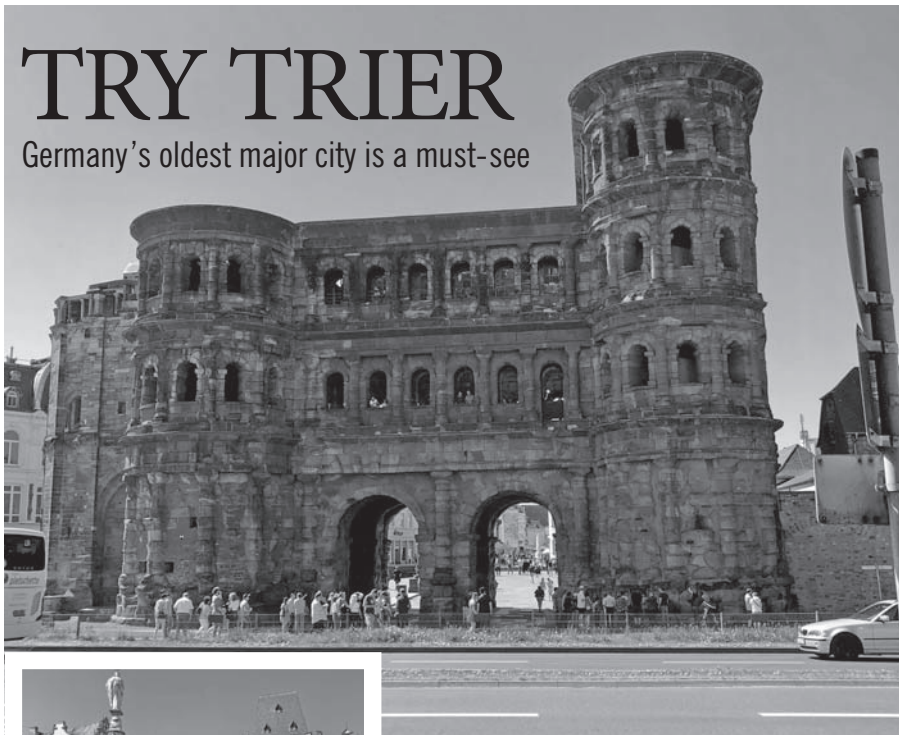
Star Wars Jedi: Fallen Order
Electronic Arts

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe

TRY TRIER

Germany's oldest major city is a must-see



Left: World-famous Porta Nigra was a principal gate into the walled city of Trier, Germany, during its Roman heyday. Next door is the museum dedicated to the city's Roman past.

Inset: Trier's central marketplace, or Hauptmarkt, is comprised of ornate buildings.

PHOTOS BY SLOBODAN LEKIC
Stars and Stripes



By SLOBODAN LEKIC
Stars and Stripes

Trier was founded by the Celts in the 4th century B.C. Almost exactly 2,000 years ago, when the Roman empire expanded from Gaul into western Germany, the town then known as Treveris became a bulwark on the border between civilization and the hostile barbarian tribes in northern Europe.

As a result, history buffs will find plenty of Roman ruins — and also medieval treasures — strewn across the modern-day city, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The best place to begin a tour is at the massive, world-famous Porta Nigra ("Black Gate"), which was the main entrance through the walls that once surrounded the Roman town. Built in 180 A.D., the name derives from its sandstone, darkened by nearly two millennia of residue. Next to it is a large museum which traces its history, with explanations in both German and English. The entire four-floor structure, whose interiors were heavily modified during medieval times, can be accessed by visitors.

A 15-minute stroll down the town's central pedestrian street, Simeonstrasse, will bring you to the oldest church in Germany. The Basilica, once known as the Aula Palatina, is now an evangelical church. Originally built as an audience hall for Emperor Constantine in the 4th century, it is 220 feet in length and 108 feet high — the biggest Roman building in the world still

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Trier is 60 miles northwest of Ramstein Air Base along the A62 and A1 autobahn. Or 90 miles from Wiesbaden on the B50.

COSTS

An "Antiquity Card" costing 12 euros per adult provides access to the main Roman sites (the Basilica is free). Up to four children under 18 are included in that price.

Parking: The Porta Nigra near the famous gate charges 1.80 euros an hour, or 15 euros for a day.

— Slobodan Lekic

in regular use today. It was firebombed by the Allies in World War II, but somehow managed to survive and was restored to its original Roman appearance in the 1950s.

Another 10-minute stroll through the grounds of the over-the-top ornamentally decorated Rococo palace adjacent the Basilica will bring you to Trier's sprawling Imperial Baths complex. The jaw-dropping maze of the baths, which were never actually completed, can be explored both on the surface and through a network of underground passageways through which hot water was once pumped into the various pools.

Trier also boasts plenty of non-Roman sights that can be visited on a daytrip. The Hauptmarkt, the marketplace halfway between the Porta Nigra and the Basilica, was the center of medieval Trier. It is framed by colorful Renaissance buildings and includes a central pillar and cross where public punishments were once carried out.

Another major tourist draw is the restored home of Karl Marx, the controversial German philosopher and



The statue of German philosopher and social revolutionary Karl Marx, who was born and spent his youth in Trier, is located just off Porta Nigra square.

social revolutionary whose works were used — long after his death — as the basis for the communist ideology. The house was gutted by the Nazis in 1945 and the interior is completely new. Last year, the Chinese government donated a 15-foot bronze statue to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Trier's most famous son. The statue, located just past the Porta Nigra museum, has rapidly become a focal point for throngs of tourists from all over the world.

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Get steamed at Iceland's geothermal sights

Iceland, formed long ago by volcanoes, is known for its otherworldly landscape, with steaming fields and percolating mud. The volcanic activity produces naturally heated water, which Icelanders have cleverly harnessed not just as an energy source, but for thermal baths and pools. Geothermal experiences — both visual and immersive — are worth seeking out on a visit here.

Wandering through the colorful terrain of a geothermal field is a classic Icelandic treat. The most visited geothermal sight is Geysir, home to the world's first-known geyser, on Iceland's most famous tourist route, the Golden Circle. The original Geysir is now mostly dormant, but the field around it still steams and bubbles nonstop, periodically punctuated by a dramatic eruption of scalding water from the one predictably active geyser, Strokkur. Strokkur erupts about every five minutes, shooting about 50 feet into the air.

Though it lacks a spouting geyser, a more impressive thermal area is at Namafjall, in North Iceland along the Ring Road that encircles most of the island nation. It's surrounded by mountains and far less crowded than Geysir. Namafjall's pungent sulfurous fumes are worth the stink — plug your nose — to explore the fumaroles (little stacked-rock vents spitting steam), bubbling pools and a terrain brushed in vivid hues.

Closer to the capital city Reykjavik, the Seltn area on the Reykjanes Peninsula is also striking. This steaming and smelly landscape hints at the geothermal power just underfoot. A boardwalk and marked paths outline a 15-minute circuit through the field over boiling hot water and steam. Partway through the loop, a hilltop view-

point overlooks the entire area, with Kleifarvatn lake just beyond. The environment here is impacted by botched attempts to exploit the geothermal field for energy — first in the 1750s, and most recently in the 1940s. In 1999, one of the bore holes from the last attempt got plugged up and



Rick Steves

exploded violently, creating a 30-foot crater now filled with water. Along with marveling at the natural phenomena, I enjoy learning just how the country harnesses the substantial power of its thermal waters. Just off the ground (which is piped to homes for heating) drives the turbines that generate electricity.

For many, the best way to experience Iceland's geothermal delights is to literally plunge into one of Iceland's naturally occurring thermal baths. The most famous (and most expensive) is the spa-like Blue Lagoon, with milky blue water filling a volcanic reservoir on the Reykjanes Peninsula, near Keflavik Airport. Nestled in a lunar-like landscape, this steamy oasis is a sprawling hot-water playground for grown-ups. I like to splash and splash around, exploring the hidden nooks and crannies of the interconnected pools, and head to the hot, thundering waterfalls to



CAMERON HEWITT/Ricksteves.com

Namafjall, along the Ring Road that circles Iceland, is one of the island's most accessible and impressive geothermal areas and a great place to find fumaroles.

give my shoulders a pounding. The naturally heated water is thoroughly relaxing. Also relaxing is the swim-up bar; admission includes a drink for each bather.

Other premium but less upscale pools are Fontana (on the Golden Circle route); Myvatn Nature Baths (partway around the Ring Road, in North Iceland); and Krauma (in West Iceland).

While those baths have big marketing budgets and attract lots of international visitors, they're rarely frequented by Icelanders — who know that you can bathe in equally luxuriant 100°F water for a fraction of the price, albeit in simpler sur-

roundings, at one of the country's many thermal swimming pools. Every community seems to have a well-maintained pool complex, often with a warm lap pool and smaller hot pools (called "hot pots"); many also have saunas, steam rooms and waterslides. These pools provide a pleasantly authentic Icelandic experience, and an opportunity to rub elbows with locals. Websites listing the thermal pools, include Sundlaugar.is and Hot Pot Iceland.

Rick Steves (ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Boards, bikes in Munich

Fans of less traditional sports might enjoy Munich MASH, a three-day event featuring top-level contests in skateboarding, wakeboarding and BMX.

The spacious Olympic Park nicely accommodates the action unfolding June 28-30.

The Olympic Lake becomes a wakeboard park with three new features that riders will face for the first time. Also new this year is a separate contest for female wakeboarders. The BMX Lake Line pits 12 of the world's best freestyle BMX riders on a course strung from a 100-foot, 120-foot-high tower. Skateboarders tie to be named best all-around on a downhill course coined the Red Bull Roller Coaster.

In between watching the competitions, visitors can enjoy the MASH fest with an interactive area for trying out new sports, music, a chill-out zone and food trucks. Its Cultural Village offers artists, designers and craftspeople.

The festival takes place from 1 p.m.-9 p.m. June 28, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. June 29 and 11 a.m.-6 p.m. June 30. Skateboarding competitions are scheduled on Friday and Saturday, BMX races on Saturday and Sunday and wakeboarding on all three days. Entry to the festival is free. Events may be canceled in the event of bad weather. Online: munich-mash.com



Karen Bradbury

Read more about things to do in the Europe Traveler blog: [strips.com/blogs/europe-traveler](https://www.strips.com/blogs/europe-traveler)

Long Night of Culture in Kaiserslautern

There's no need to be stuck in that same old rut when seeking out nightlife in K-town this Saturday night.

The "Kaiserslautern Lange Nacht der Kultur" on June 29 represents the chance to experience as many out-of-the-ordinary cultural encounters as one can squeeze into a single evening. Thirty venues, from major cultural institutions such as the Pfalztheater, Kammergarn, Fruchthalle and the Japanese Garden, along with less conventional spaces including hotel lobbies, an Irish pub and a secondhand shop, entice guests with entertainment, exhibits, culinary specialties and other offerings. Even a bus driving through town gets in on the act, with musicians, poets

and a philosopher on board.

The theme that binds this year's performances is "Heimat," or a feeling of connectedness with one's native or chosen place. The experimental variety of the night's offerings and the combination of professional and amateur artists and actors who bring it all together are part of the charm of this special night.

Performances include a band made up of members from half a dozen far-flung lands from Eritrea to Indonesia; an Irish dance ensemble's interpretation of a scene from "Alice in Wonderland"; and sultry Cuban sounds, with stops for sampling locally-made craft beer or Arabian specialties in between.

A bracelet allowing entry to performances in all the event's main venues goes for 14 euros adults and 10 euros for ages 3-18; entry to the late-night offerings between midnight and 3 a.m. goes for an additional 6 euros. A family ticket for two adults and two children goes for 30 euros. Online: tinyurl.com/yyk74fm4

Hamburg Harley Days

The deep-throated rumble of American steel will echo through the streets of Germany's beloved port city this weekend as Hamburg Harley Days welcomes tens of thousands of bikers from throughout Europe. Through June 30, the city's Grossmarkt will serve as home



FABIAN STOFFERS/Mash

The skateboards, wakeboards and BMX bikes will be flying as MASH takes place June 28-30 in the Olympic Park in Munich.

base for fans of the American brand. At the Harley village, official dealers will offer gear and demo rides and entertainment will be provided in the form of fire shows, a Wall of Death show and around a dozen rock concerts.

At Saturday's Ride-In Bike Show on the Moenckbergstrasse, the best of 120 customized bikes receive awards in eight categories.

The parade of bikes and bikers is always a highlight. Starting at 11 a.m. Sunday, riders will gather by the Grossmarkt stage, and at 1:30 p.m., they'll set forth on a 20-mile route passing by Hamburg's most beautiful landmarks. All bikers are welcome to

participate. Entry to Hamburg Harley Days is free. Online: hamburgharleydays.com Can't make it to Hamburg at such short notice? Other Harley-Davidson-themed events this year include Prague Harley Days July 5-6; Morzine Harley Days in France July 11-14; Willingen Bike Week in Germany July 11-14; Dresden Harley Days in Germany July 26-28; Polish Bike Week in Karpcz, Poland, Aug. 1-4; St. Petersburg Harley Days Aug. 2-4; Thunder in the Glens in Aviemore, Scotland, Aug. 23-26; European Bike Week at the Faaker See in Austria Sept. 3-8; or the H.O.G. Rally Minsk in Belarus Sept. 13-14. Online: tinyurl.com/y4c2d2lot

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

Bistrorante Da Adriana in Kaiserslautern is on the corner of Gaustasse and Salzstrasse. It specializes in pizza and pasta, but also features schnitzel, fish and poultry dishes.

After Hours: Germany

By MICHAEL ABRAMS
Stars and Stripes

I first noticed Bistrorante Da Adriana while driving a college home from work. It was dark outside and the warm lights from inside the Kaiserslautern eatery looked quite inviting.

It took a while, but I finally took up the invitation and I wasn't disappointed.

The Bistrorante is in an old building with high windows, wood floors and modern paintings of Kaiserslautern decorating the walls.

Bistrorante is, of course, a play on words: the French bistro and the Italian ristorante. While the interior could be considered bistrolike, the cuisine is definitely Italian.

Look for the blackboard just inside the entrance. It features dishes not on the regular menu.

We tried two different raviolis from it. And they were delicious: one, salmon-filled in a hearty tomato-cream sauce peppered with more salmon, the other stuffed with ricotta and spinach in a butter-sage sauce. Both were delicious.

On another visit we tried the fried anchovies. I know, not everybody's taste, but these were crisply fried (headless) little fish served on a bed of arugula. A nice light dish on a warm day.

On the menu, pizzas come in great variety and in three sizes. We tried a Rustica. While the toppings — salami, pepperoni, chilis, onions, olives and anchovies — again might not be to everyone's taste, it too was delicious.

Same goes for the pasta. Da Adriana's offers more than a dozen sauces and you can have them over spaghetti, penne or tagliatelle. Or for an extra 50

BISTRORANTE DA ADRIANA

Location: Gaustasse 1, 67655 Kaiserslautern
Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Friday. 5:30 to 11 p.m. Saturdays. Closed Sundays.

Prices: Starters 2.50 euros to 7 euros; Main dishes 7.50 euros to 19 euros. Pizzas start at 6 euros for a small. Lunch specials are 7.50 euros for pizza or pasta from the menu with a side salad or 8.50 euros for a schnitzel with French fries and salad. Wines start at 4.90 euros; a beer or large soft drink is 3.90 euros.

Information: Bistrorante Da Adriana is on Facebook.

— Michael Abrams

cents, tortellini or gnocchi. They also offer oven-baked pastas like cannelloni and lasagna.

To round out the menu there are salads, fish, seafood, pork schnitzels and beef rumpl steaks. You can wash it all down with soft drinks, beer or from their selection of Italian wines.

Da Adriana also serves lunch specials during the week. For 7.50 euros you have your choice of a small pizza or pasta with a side salad, or for a euro more a schnitzel with fries and salad.

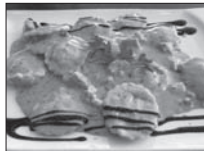
Everything is freshly prepared, so some dishes might take a while, but the lunch specials usually arrive promptly.

Round it all off with a cup of hot, strong espresso.

abrams.mike@stripes.com
Twitter: @stripes_photo



Cannelloni, as served at Bistrorante Da Adriana.



Salmon-filled ravioli in a tomato, cream and salmon sauce.



Ravioli stuffed with spinach and ricotta in a butter and sage sauce topped with parmesan cheese is lovingly plated at Bistrorante Da Adriana.



Pan-fried anchovies on a bed of arugula are more of an appetizer, but can make for a nice light lunch.

Spice rack can give chicken salad a kick

America's Test Kitchen

To apply some modern tricks to old-school chicken salad, we turned to our spice rack. Most spices boast an impressive portfolio of phytonutrients — often the very same compounds that give them such potent flavor.

Mild, creamy chicken salad was an ideal canvas. First, we found we could replace two-thirds of the mayonnaise with low-fat yogurt (and use less dressing overall) and still deliver enough creamy tang to keep everyone happy. To spice up our dressing, we added turmeric and black pepper.

Long used as a medicinal spice in India, turmeric is associated with many health benefits. Black pepper — commonly

paired with turmeric — may boost the potency of turmeric, especially in the presence of a little heart-healthy fat.

With our dressing ready, we poached chicken breasts to perfection by heating them just until the water reached 170 F, then removing the pot from the heat and letting the chicken cook through slowly and gently.

For add-ins, we opted for dried cherries and toasted walnuts to provide crunch. Instead of a whisper of herbs, we stirred in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of parsley leaves (herbs, like spices, contain concentrated nutrients), which added a pop of green color and an herbal back note. Two cups of tender baby spinach provided a fresh finish to our updated chicken salad sandwiches.

TURMERIC CHICKEN SALAD SANDWICHES

Servings: 6

Start to finish: 1 hour

Ingredients

Salt and pepper
2 (4- to 6-ounce) organic boneless, skinless chicken breasts, no more than 1 inch thick, trimmed of all visible fat

1 teaspoon cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground turmeric

Pinch ground cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup organic plain low-fat yogurt

2 tablespoons mayonnaise

2 teaspoons lemon juice

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon Dijon mustard

1 garlic clove, minced

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup walnuts, toasted and chopped coarse

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh parsley leaves

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened dried tart cherries

1 shallot, minced

12 slices hearty 100% whole-grain sandwich bread

2 ounces (2 cups) baby spinach

Directions

Dissolve 1 tablespoon salt in 6 cups cold water in Dutch

oven. Submerge chicken in water. Heat pot over medium heat until water registers 170 F. Turn off heat, cover pot, and let stand until chicken registers 165 F, 15 to 17 minutes. Transfer chicken to paper towel-lined rimmed baking sheet and refrigerate until cool, about 30 minutes.

Combine oil, turmeric and cinnamon together in bowl and microwave until fragrant, about 30 seconds; let cool slightly. In large bowl, whisk oil mixture, yogurt, mayonnaise, lemon juice, mustard, garlic, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt together until smooth.

Pat cooled chicken dry with paper towels and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces. Add chicken, walnuts, parsley, cherries and shallot to bowl with yogurt mixture, toss to combine, and season with salt and pepper to taste. Divide chicken salad evenly over 6 bread slices, then top with spinach. Top with remaining 6 bread slices. Serve.



AMERICA'S TEST KITCHEN/AP

Turmeric gives chicken salad sandwiches some extra flair.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe



SARAH WILDMAN/For The Washington Post

A baguette lover's gluten-filled journey through the City of Light

BY SARAH WILDMAN

Special to The Washington Post

I am in love with the art and heritage of French bread.

Fortunately I'm not alone. Each year one chef is chosen in the Grand Prix de la Baguette de tradition française, an accolade bestowed each April for the past 25 years. The winner goes to a handcrafted baguette that beats out dozens of entrants from across Paris and tops a list of 10 finalists; all compete for a cash prize of \$4,900 and — most importantly — mass recognition for superior artisanal baking. All 10 are then permitted to toss a gold laurel over their shop window emblazoned with the year of award and their ranking.

That gold stamp means each year's list of winners provides an unusual guide to the city, a path toward walking Paris with an eye to the best, most iconic, crispiest baguettes imaginable. It offers travelers a key to the city and a tasting menu of one of the anchors of every French table.

Over four chilly days in March, my partner, Ian, and I embarked on a journey of gluten. A mission of carbohydrates. A 96-hour tasting marathon. We ate as many of the award-winning baguettes as we could. Baguettes studded with seeds. Baguettes that are simply traditional. Baguettes sliced in half and stuffed with tuna. Baguettes adorned with brie, arugula and pears. I ate them with jam. With goat cheese. With butter. With salt. With nothing.

We walked 12 miles one day, 10 another. We saw Paris anew and witnessed how the local boulangerie-pâtisserie still marks each arrondissement. Once

or twice I cheated, diverting to eat the wheaty country loaves at the Poilane bakery in the sixth and tasting the exquisite croissants at Maison Plisson in the third.

But mostly I ate baguettes, dropping crumbs in my scarf and noshing as I strolled. It was our first major trip away from our children; we wanted to make the most of it.

Beyond the Eiffel Tower, or the kissing couples on bridges across the Seine, the Louvre, the Pompidou, the Tuileries, the beloved, beleaguered Notre Dame — there is one image that, for me, has always symbolized Parisian life: the early morning and midday line out the door of

a boulangerie. It is a time-honored wait for a baguette, typically endured next to a row of perfect pastries behind a glass case.

That line is democratizing — in it you'll find students and besuited officegoers, workers in painters' overalls, proper matrons with purses that click shut and coats that nip in at the waist, tourists and shopkeepers. Each patron hands over about \$1.25 to \$1.50 for a baguette.

The Prix de la Baguette comes with an honor that bestows more work, that being 12 months of baking for the Elysée Palace in Paris, the home of the French president. Prize-winning loaves are

judged on a crispy crust with just the right amount of crumb and strict adherence to French rules for the perfect baguette: an exact amount of flour, yeast, water and salt. No other ingredients. They must be baked in the same place where they are sold.

On day one of my carb-heavy adventure, I went to three recent prize winners and finalists in the Marais: Ernest & Valentin above the Arts et Métiers metro stop in the third arrondissement, where you can watch bakers turn out baguettes in real time through a picture window and pick up a gravlax sandwich on seeded-baguette or a brie-arugula-pear combo on traditional. I tried a plain baguette at Maison Hubert Rambuteau on Rue Rambuteau, a block from the Pompidou, and glanced through the windows of one of my go-to favorites, Au Petit Versailles du Marais on Rue François Miron near the St. Paul metro in the fourth, with its gorgeously painted beaux-arts interior. The last boasts a space to sit and eat a tart with a cup of tea. The line for the tradition can be long, but I have happily waited to pick up a baguette there many times.

On Day 2, Ian and I headed to the Luxembourg Gardens, wandering through the not-quite-yet-green manicured spaces, encircling the pond and back out again to try the pâtisserie Maison Decorde on Rue Gay-Lussac in the fifth arrondissement. There, we ran into a massive demonstration: the children's global day of action on climate change that was happening simultaneously around the globe. A professor standing to the side told me these strikes had been taking place for weeks in Paris.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31



IAN HALPERN/For The Washington Post

Above: Customers line up for baguettes at the Bastille Market in Paris in March. Top: Baguettes at the Boulangerie 2M on Boulevard Raspail in Paris.

FROM PAGE 30

I worried about my carbon footprint in my search of baguettes. I felt guilty about not bringing my children. And then I kept eating.

I began to see the laurels everywhere, aided by websites such as La Cuisine Paris, which maps them all out. In the 18th there was Au Duc de la Chapelle, where Chef Anis Boubouba made a recent second appearance on the list of best baguettes. Chefs can compete more than once but must wait four years after a first-place win.

After 24 years of the competition, there are winners to be found in almost every arrondissement. (The 2019 winner, named after we left town, is Fabrice Leroy, of the 12th.)

Chefs will tell me you shouldn't eat a hot baguette, that the true taste emerges when it cools, but I have always loved them direct from the oven. In 15-odd years of coming to Paris for work, one of my most memorable baguettes was at the Boulangerie Aux Délices de Glacier on Boulevard Auguste Blanqui, near the offices of Le Monde newspaper. It was during the French elections — I was on my way to dinner with a friend; we shouldn't have been snacking. But we were urged by the woman behind the counter to wait a moment. When she beckoned us back, the baguette we purchased poured with steam as we broke it open. We sat at an outside table and ate it at once. The chef there — Khemoussi Mansour — won second prize in the baguette competition in 2017. At the time, I didn't know to look for the label.

If one thing stands out above the competition in the past several years, it's that the prize-winning chefs often have names that reflect a Paris of diverse origins, from North Africa to Japan. They are the bakers, the early risers.

The 2018 champion, Mahmoud M'Seddi, a 28-year-old Parisian-born baker of Tunisian descent, told me that winning the competition "changed my life."

"Before, I was an ordinary baker," he continued in French. "Now I'm an ambassador of bread." After his win, newspaper and television journalists from around the world came to interview him. He has three patisseries, and they are spread out — one on Boulevard Raspail in the 14th arrondissement and a stone's throw from the Fondation Cartier, a soaring Jean Nouvel-designed mecca of modern art, made of glass and surrounded by gardens; the other two are in the 13th arrondissement.

I visited all three. We met on my second trip to a M'Seddi boulangerie, on Rue de Tolbiac. Upon arrival he insisted I take a pistachio cake, as part of house hospitality. He was enormously cheerful, playing us videos of his meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron.

M'Seddi is also worried: He is concerned that French shoppers will be drawn to the convenience of baguettes for sale at supermarket chains — the Monoprix, Carrefour, Franprix.

But so far, these laurels keep both Parisians and tourists alike coming into his shop and those of his fellow, ahem, bread winners.

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Pacific



No-drama Keramas

Japanese island archipelago a dream for snorkelers, paddleboaters

By DINA MISHEV

Special to The Washington Post

Zamami Island has one stoplight, and every time I walk past it, I catch it red. That's OK, because you can't be in a rush here. Anyway, this stoplight is more aspirational than essential; during my week on the island, I can count the number of cars on my fingers and toes.

One of the 36 islands in the Kerama Islands archipelago, Zamami has an area of about six square miles and a year-round population of approximately 600 people. (Together, the four inhabited Keramas are home to roughly 1,500.)

The only way on or off the island about 20 miles southwest of Okinawa Island in southern Japan is by boat and, on good days, there are only three public ferries a day. On bad days when swells in the East China Sea are more than 10 feet, as on the day I was supposed to arrive, there are none.

I disembark the Queen Zamami at 10 a.m. one Thursday in early February with my inflatable SUP (Stand Up Paddle) in tow and reservations for three days of diving with the only English-speaking dive shop that responded to my email query. Winter is the offseason in the Keramas. The weather isn't that wintry, though — these islands are at about the same

latitude as Hollywood, Fla., and the average February water and air temperatures are both about 75 degrees.

Almost immediately, I regret traveling with a SUP. In addition to an 11-foot-long board, my SUP bag also holds a life jacket, collapsible paddle, pump and a large selection of snacks in foil bags that are as colorful as they are indecipherable. I snack up in Okinawa because there are no grocery stores in the Keramas. Together, all of this weighs at least 50 pounds. And the room I've booked at a minshuku (a traditional family-owned bed-and-breakfast with tatami mats and futons instead of Western-style beds) is in Ama, the smallest of Zamami's three communities and about one mile from Zamami Port.

I wander the entirety of the port in search of a taxi. This takes less than three minutes and is not fruitful. In a combined souvenir shop and visitors center, a 20-something man with a kind smile apologizes for this. I can't find a taxi because there aren't any. Mr. Kind Smile calls the manager of my minshuku, Naho Tanaka, and she comes and gets me herself.

What Ama lacks in taxi convenience it makes up for with a three-quarter-mile-long (and mostly sand) beach that is a perfect SUP launch

spot. Because so much coral is in the waters around these islands, beaches are a mix of sand and pieces of coral eroded into rounded, fingernail-sized shapes.

The Kerama Islands are a hot spot for watching turtles. Three species — green, hawksbill and loggerhead — live in the islands. On Zamami, Ama Beach is turtle ground zero. Naho tells me they sometimes come onto the beach to feed, but walking past a deserted campground and onto the beach, I see no turtles. Neither is there a single other person.

Had I waited until summer to come to the Keramas, I could have enjoyed 95-degree days and swimming in 85-degree water, but I would have had to share the islands with 200,000 other visitors and not just the three that came over on the Queen Zamami with me that morning.

Ama Beach is only 500 feet from the minshuku, and as I'm carrying my board and paddle to it, a sign erected by the Ama Sea Turtle & Local Ocean Protection Association alerts me to what's ahead. REQUESTS FROM THE SEA TURTLE: WHEN I'M EATING SEA GRASS APPROACH CAREFULLY, PLEASE DON'T FOLLOW ME AROUND, OBSERVE ME FROM A DISTANCE.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

Photos courtesy of jnto.go.jp



WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Pacific

IF YOU GO

Where to stay

Minshuku Dive House Yadokari

142 Ama, Zamami Island
011-81-98-987-2231
Online: ama-yadokari.com/
english-page
Seven traditional Japanese-style rooms with tatami mats and futons a three-minute walk from Ama Beach; manager speaks some English. Bathrooms are shared and there are separate shower rooms for men and women. Rooms from about \$43. Traditional Japanese breakfast about \$5 and dinner about \$15.

Stay Holoholo

124 Ama, Zamami Island
011-81-98-987-2513
Online: stayholoholo.com

Six rooms with western-style beds, private bathrooms, and air conditioning run by a local family and attached to the Zamami Yadokari dive shop a short walk from the port. Rooms from about \$82. Traditional Japanese meals are available; breakfast about \$9 and dinner about \$22.

Ama Beach Campground and Cottages

697-1 Ama, Zamami Island
011-81-98-987-3259
Online: tinyurl.com/y3p9u4f3
Just across the street from the shaded Ama Beach Campground are simple, traditional cottages (you'll sleep on tatami mats). Each cabin can hold up to 10 people. Reservations accepted only by phone. About \$3 per person per night for campground. Two- to three-person tent about \$18 per night; sleeping pads and mats about \$8 per night. Cottages about \$188 per night for up to six people.

Where to eat

Restaurant Marumiya

432-2 Zamami, Zamami Island
011-81-98-987-3166
Locals and visitors come here for its large menu of Japanese and Okinawan food. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Entrees from \$5.

105 Store

105 Zamami, Zamami Island
011-81-98-987-2656
The largest market on the island sells snacks and a good selection of bento boxes, dumplings and sandwiches. Open 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. Dumplings from about \$1; bento boxes from about \$5.

Wayama Mozuku

9 Zamami, Zamami Island
011-81-98-987-2069
Online: wayamamozuku.jp
Open-air eatery uses locally-grown seaweed in most dishes. Open daily for lunch. Entrees from \$7.



Sea life abounds near coral reefs, which await snorkelers and divers just off the Kerama Islands.

FROM PAGE 32

It's doubly good that I have Ama Beach to myself because I break the turtle-watching rules almost immediately. Paddling around the shallows in front of the beach, turtles are everywhere, but camouflaged. I do not see them until my SUP — which I eventually figure out probably looks to them like a shark, one of their main predators — approaches. I think the dark shape 10 feet in front of my board is a hump of coral, but then it moves. Even though it swims away faster than I've ever seen a turtle move, it's definitely a turtle.

To paddle to an island the size of several football fields laid end-to-end, it takes less than 10 minutes. One end of this islet has a faint trail climbing to a weathered lighthouse. The other end is a peninsula beach. A group of Japanese kayakers eat lunch here. Already used to having beaches to myself, I wave and continue on.

Thirty minutes later, I paddle my board onto a beach twice the size of Ama on an island that seems as least as big as Zamami. There's no one else around. From a dry bag, I pull out my Kindle and a pork cutlet bento box. After eating, I lie down on the coral, which molds to my body better than any memory foam mattress. I mean to read, but instead nap for an hour.

Coral beaches are the best: There's no sand to clear out of every crevice or to infiltrate a camera lens. Because of the latter, I take lots and lots of photos. The water here is itself such an indescribable shade that it has its own name, "Kerama Blue," which is also what the waters in and around these islands are called.

The Kerama Blue, much of which is protected as Kerama Shoto National Park, is not just blue, though, it's also clear. When diving, there is 100 feet of visibility.

Dive master Seiji Miyazato picks me up at my minshuku at 8:50 my second morning on the island. The dive boat has room for 15 clients, but today it's just me. This is the case for each of my five dives with Seiji.

Some scuba divers keep meticulous notes on the type of fish and sea life they see on every dive — I am not one of them. I know the correct names of maybe a couple dozen of the fish I've seen during my 15 years of diving. Any fish that was in "Finding Nemo" I know by its name in that movie. (The Keramas have lots of Nemos.)

Diving around Zamami Island, I recognize

lionfish, sea horses, sea slugs and starfish, and see dozens of fish for which I don't know the names. Kerama Shoto National Park is home to 248 species of hard coral and even more species of fish.

I watch an octopus change color and see a whitetip shark sleeping. On the seafloor beneath the overhang of a coral reef, the shark looks like it is snoring. A school of thousands of purple queen anthias swims into me, briefly giving me vertigo. Parrotfish nibble at my fingers on several dives.

I am close enough to a sea turtle for a long enough period of time to count the number of wrinkles it has on each eyelid. I watch another turtle tear at a hummock of hard coral like it is cardboard. Yet another just hangs in the water, suspended as gracefully and easily as a ray of refracted light.

Skimming the bottom in a shallow area — none of the dives I did were deeper than 40 feet and many were only 20 feet; this means that much of what you can see diving, you can also see by snorkeling — Seiji finds a bullet casing the length of my finger. He picks it out of the sand and hands it to me. It's brass, but has rusted to a Smurf-y blue. It's heavy, but it floats featherlike when I release it — dancing, dipping and swooping — back to the seafloor. It's probably been in the Kerama Blue since March 26, 1945, when the Battle of Okinawa started here.

The evening after holding the World War II bullet, I go looking for the Tower of Peace, a monument to honor the 300 Zamamians who died in that war. The majority of these — 246 — were suicides, which the Japanese government led the islanders to believe was a better alternative than being captured by the enemy. The monument is set on a steep hillside in a tangle of forest about a 10-minute walk above Zamami Port.

From the monument, I take the long way back to Ama. Because there are so few cars, Zamami's 15 or so miles of pavement feel more like pathways than roads.

Walking them, I see more pedestrians than cars. The road to and along the island's northern shore is twisty and vertiginous and has several fine overlooks. As I walk between overlooks, a car that passes me slows down. The driver is a weathered fisherman. He doesn't speak English, but uses gestures to ask whether I need a ride.

I accept the offer. As we drop back into Zamami Port, of course we hit the stoplight when it's red.

What to do

Furuzamami Beach

Zamami Island
011-81-98-987-2277
Between April and September, the most popular beach on Zamami Island has a small restaurant and kiosks that rent beach umbrellas, chaise longues and snorkeling gear. Free; bus from port about \$3. It's a 25-minute walk from the port.

Ama Beach

Zamami Island
It's often possible to see (and swim with) sea turtles at this mellow beach a 20-minute walk from Zamami Port. Free; a bus from port about \$3.

Scuba at Zamami Yadokari

124 Zamami, Zamami Island
011-81-98-987-3757
Online: yadokari-zamami.com
The English-speaking dive master at this PADI-certified dive shop picks dive sites based on current conditions. Available daily with advance reservations. One-boat dive with rental gear, about \$116; single dive without gear, \$58.

Wayama Mozuku

9 Zamami, Zamami Island
011-81-98-987-2069
Online: wayamamozuku.jp
The restaurant offers guided snorkeling tours to coral reefs too far from shore to swim to. Half day guided tours with rental mask, snorkel, fins from \$58. Full day tours from \$85.

Drifter

3-1 901-3402 Zamami, Zamami Island
011-81-70-5488-4378
Online: drifter.okinawa.jp
Half- and full-day guided SUP and kayak tours from Zamami Port. Half-day tours, including board and paddle rental, start about \$62. Full-day tours, \$107.

Zamami Island Whale Watching Association

1-1 Zamamichisaki, Zamami Island
011-81-098-896-4141
Online: zwwa.okinawa/english/infomation
Humpback whales return between December and April to mate. Boat tours offered daily from late December to early April. Adults about \$54.

Tower of Peace

Above Zamami Port Terminal, Zamami Island
A tower dedicated to the several hundred Zamami islanders killed in a World War II battle. The tower is about a 10-minute walk up Mount Takatsuki from Zamami Port. Free.

Inazaki Observatory

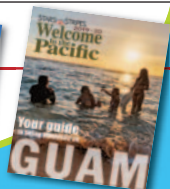
North side of Zamami Island
Its recently reconstructed observation deck high on the island's north side is a great spot to watch the sun set. Free.

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WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

Millennials not money movers

Less likely to combine bank accounts than previous generations, young couples missing out on benefits of merging finances

By AMRITA JAYAKUMAR

NerdWallet

As a millennial couple, you and your partner might not be planning to blend finances even if you've been together for a while.

Venmo is convenient, after all; the peer-to-peer money transfer app makes it easy to split costs like rent and utilities. Or perhaps you've each agreed to pay specific bills while keeping separate bank accounts.

In a Bank of America report released last year, 28% of couples between the ages of 23 and 37 surveyed said they kept their finances separate. That compared with 11% of couples ages 38-52 and 13% of couples 53-71.

There's no "right" way to manage finances, but there are benefits to mixing love and money. Here are tips from millennial couples who make it work.

First, set expectations: When Juli Olson and her boyfriend, Travis McClelland, both 31, moved in together in Houston, their finances remained separate. Olson says she had a frugal upbringing, and mismatched expectations led to arguments. "He may think spending this much money on going out to eat is OK, but it didn't feel good for me," she says.

Eventually, the couple compromised, creating a shared budget that balanced spending on necessities and amusements. "He's introduced more fun into my life for sure," she says.

When you're ready to talk with your partner, be honest about your attitudes toward money and agree on expectations. How much is reasonable to spend on things like eating out or groceries? Will you both save for a shared goal, like a vacation or car? The 50/30/20 budget is a good place to start. It divides spending into needs, wants and savings.

Joint accounts save time, hassle: A joint account is not just for convenience. If an emergency arises — your partner is hospitalized, for example — getting access to pay a bill takes effort, says Christine Centeno, 36, a certified financial planner at Simplicity Wealth Management near Richmond, Va.

"Even if you are married, you have to jump through a couple of hoops to get access to the funds," she says. If you don't have a joint account, she advises adding your partner as the beneficiary on your checking account.

Centeno, like many millennials, uses an online-only bank. She says it was easy to add her husband, Osmin, 37, to her account; the bank mailed her paperwork to sign.

50-50 is not always fair: Splitting things equally may not be fair when one partner makes more than the other. Consider a proportional split instead, Centeno says.

Calculate your total household income before expenses, and what share of the total comes from each income. Use that as a guideline — you pay 60% of expenses while your partner pays 40%, for example.

This also helps each person put money away for retirement or general savings, Centeno says. That's crucial if you split up or your partner dies.

Ashley Patrick, 34, and her husband Tyler, 35, took less than two years to pay off more than \$47,000 in student loans, a tax bill and a car. The Charlotte, N.C., couple used a mix of budgeting, taking on extra work and selling things.

Ashley, a blogger, uses her husband's bigger paycheck — which arrives a week before hers — to pay larger bills, and her own paycheck to cover smaller bills the following week.

"It's something after a couple years I figured out, after paying late fees and missing payments," she says.

Set up check-ins: Olson and McClelland have a weekly budget check-in, using an app called Honeyfi. While paying off debt, the Patricks tracked their progress every Friday on a spreadsheet.

Millennials aren't shy when it comes to talking about money; 97% of couples ages 18-34 said they discuss finances at least once a month, compared with the average 88% for all age groups, according to a 2018 survey by TD Bank.

"For a lot of couples, it's easy to fall into the trap of only talking about money when something stressful happens," says Sam Schultz, co-founder of Honeyfi. "Try to get into the habit of checking in about money even when stuff's not bad."



WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE



Ruby Amsen models the 1970s-influenced skater pants she makes in her Amsterdam home.

DANOTA AMSEN, RUBY AMSEN/AP

Sewing for sport

Do-it-yourselfers are creating unique workout clothes to inspire others

By JENNIFER FORKER
Associated Press

If necessity is the mother of invention, then pending motherhood may have given Sarah Vander Neut a creative boost.

The Aurora, Colo., seamstress was pregnant with her first daughter eight years ago and running in her husband's heavy hoodie when she decided to sew a jacket to fit her growing form.

"I was running every day until I had her, and it was winter," said Vander Neut, now the mother of two little girls. "A husband's hoodie does not make you feel fast. This jacket solved my running problems."

Already selling handmade skirts and dresses at Denver-area craft markets, Vander Neut began sewing athletic jackets in spectacular color combinations. The handmade sportswear features extra-long arms for covering hands or cuffing back, a large hole at one wrist for checking the giant sports watch, deep pockets for holding gear and reflective accents for nighttime runs. Her jackets are made from double-knit polyester — fabric designed to last.

"The light just kinda went on for me," said Vander Neut, who has an art degree and studied fashion design. "Colorado is not New York, is not L.A. This is our fashion statement. A jacket is something a woman is going to need for layering."

She's made 730 jackets since launching Vander Jacket in 2011, selling the hoodies online and at craft markets. She has no plans to let up on the five-hours-per-jacket effort.

"If I was pouring all the time in and it stopped growing then yeah, I would fall out of love pretty fast," Vander Neut said. "I'd be taking time away from my little kids and husband. It works when my little business is helping them, helping my little girls go to ballet or helping my family buy a car."

Vander Neut is not alone. Other makers pour their passion for a sport into handmade goods.

For Ruby Amsen, in the Netherlands, inspiration was twofold: She loves roller skating and the 1970s. She sews roller-skating pants and shorts in outrageous, '70s-style fabrics.

"Flare pants and Farrah Fawcett, the windy blown hair. It's mesmerizing," said Amsen, of Amsterdam.

A few years ago she learned how to dance on skates, and was hooked. She started sewing pants to accentuate her hip-hop and jazzy moves, piquing other skaters' interest.

"The '70s-style clothing really accentuates your moves," she said.

Part-time work grew into a full-time business for Amsen, who sells her skater wear on Etsy.com. The designer keeps her home minimally appointed so she can skate indoors, including while she works.

"It's like a kind of meditation for me. It keeps my mind still," Amsen said.

"Some people puzzle or go running, I start with drawing and then creating, then skating. That's one synergy going on there."

Althea Rizzo of Salem, Ore., sews rock-climbing chalk bags from second-hand stuffed animals. Her VertGear online site features chalk bags made from a pink elephant, green frog and purple zebra, among other critters.

The chalk bags appeal to a certain level of rock climber.

"The people who wear mine are not the super intense, professional athletes," Rizzo said.

"These are people who enjoy a little bit of fun and lightheartedness."

She began sewing sportswear and gear for her outdoorsy daughter. Her Etsy shop includes tank tops and shorts, made from fabric she designs.

Rizzo recently streamlined her sewing process to save time. She only sews at night and on weekends; by day, she is the earthquake, tsunami and volcano program coordinator for the state of Oregon.

The sewing work helps Rizzo avoid boredom and pay her bills.

"I like to stay busy and I like to make money," she said. "When I retire in less than 10 years, I'd like to have my student loans and mortgage paid off and a stream of income to keep me from eating cat food."

The three businesswomen are inspired to do more: Vander Neut has expanded into windbreakers, Rizzo recently added new apparel, and Amsen talks about designing jumpsuits.

"Stop? No, no, no. That's impossible," said Amsen. "My mind can't stop thinking. I have designs to last for 80 years from now."



“Colorado is not New York, is not L.A. ... A jacket is something a woman is going to need for layering.”

Sarah Vander Neut
seamstress

A model wears a Vander Jacket, handmade by Vander Neut in her Aurora, Colo., home.

SARAH VANDER NEUT/AP

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Hollywood Vampires

Rise (earMUSIC)



When Alice Cooper, Aerosmith guitarist Joe Perry and movie star Johnny Depp formed a band in 2015 to pay homage to dead drinking buddies, it might have seemed like a pleasant diversion, a one-off lark for otherwise busy artists.

That album, with its covers of classic rock songs mainly by artists who died from drug or alcohol use, was so good that it merited a second effort once everyone could find the time.

That time is now, only this time the Vamps dish up mostly new material. "Rise" starts with the insistent "I Want My Now," as good a song as Cooper has recorded in years, and "Mr. Spider" is a creepy heir to "The Black Widow." Cooper usually can't resist throwing in a tongue-in-cheek novelty track written from the perspective of some offbeat character on society's margins, and this time it's "Welcome to Bushwhackers," about an angry old man at a bar spoiling for a fight; it features a guitar cameo from Jeff Beck.

Perry's lone lead vocal is on "You Can't Put Your Arms Around A Memory," which won't make many people forget Steven Tyler, but his guitar is razor-sharp.

Depp is handed the keys to several lead vocals here, including reverently done covers of David Bowie's "Heroes" and the Jim Carroll Band's "People Who Died."

The best is "We Gotta Rise," in which Cooper, who has run for president with varying degrees of seriousness, does it again here in a humorous successor to "Elected."

— Wayne Parry
Associated Press

Los Coast

Samsara (New West)



A lot of influences lurk beneath the surface on "Samsara," the funky and eclectic debut from Los Coast, an adventurous young band out of Austin, Texas.

There's the post-Motown, 1970s-era funk vibe of "Simplify." There's the rapturing vocal that dominates "Everything But the Kitchen Sink" without sacrificing an ounce of pulsating bass.

There are jam-band sensibilities throughout that would make Jerry Garcia proud. That's more obvious in the band's stage performances, but it helps define the band's label-resistant spirit.

Yet the best work on this album surfaces as Los Coast pays homage to legendary shout-singers like Otis Redding and Little Richard on "Testify" and "Masquerade." They take things even higher on the album's two most soulful cuts, "The Morning Weight" and "Chesapeake," both sublime examples of R&B balladry.

The common element is Trey Privott, whose all-business stage demeanor belies an expressive, plaintive lead singer. His voice fits every style the band tries, and his singing provides unyielding intensity. He's so good that you wonder what would happen if the band dialed down the dabbling and leaned harder into songs that feature Privott's vocals.

That might make for a more focused sound, but it wouldn't be true to the spirit of the label-defying quintet that clearly likes to range around for the fun of it.

— Scott Stroud
Associated Press

Hurts so good

Ronson, collaborators make heartfelt fun

British producer Mark Ronson's fifth studio album "Late Night Feelings" is pretty perfect — a cool 13-track compilation uniquely suited for lonesome-hearted cruising — and somber grooving — in the after-hours.

In case anybody asks: yes, a song can be simultaneously sad and dancey. Ronson proves it with the album's title track, in which he expertly switches from steel drums to disco vibes beneath vocals from co-writer Lykke Li. Super-producer Ronson has a track record of mixing genres, blending time periods and employing unexpected sounds.

He's scored monster hits with Bruno Mars ("Uptown Funk"), Amy Winehouse ("Rehab") and Lady Gaga (they won an Oscar for "Shallow"). "Late Night Feelings" continues Ronson's trend of great songs — Miley Cyrus channels Dolly Parton on "Nothing Breaks Like a Heart," and the result is fantastic.

Grammy-winning singer Yebba sends her voice to noteworthy highs and lows on the thumping "Don't Leave Me Lonely," one of three songs to feature the budding singer. She's jazzy on "When U Went Away," but the real standout is the uber-funky "Knock Knock" — a minute-and-a-half-long track that one only wishes was longer.



Mark Ronson
Late Night Feelings
(RCA)

spacey "Spinning," featuring Ilsey. "When I'm spinning, you bring me back to Earth and you fix it. When nothing's making sense and I'm dizzy, you're the only one that I want," she sings.

There's good stuff, too, from other collaborators, including Camila Cabello, King Princess and Alicia Keys, alongside rapper The Last Artful, Dodg: Diana Gordon, who has big songwriting and production credits of her own, contributing to Beyoncé's "Lemonade" album, shines on "Why Hide."

With help from a star-studded squad, Ronson's outdone himself on "Late Night Feelings," and, boy, does the heartache feel so good.

— Melanie J. Sims
Associated Press

British producer Mark Ronson has a good chance to add to his collection of monster hits with his latest album, "Late Night Feelings."

Courtesy of RCA Records



Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real

Turn Off the News
(Guilt A Garden)
(Fantasy Records)

Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real have a piece of advice for their listeners: Turn off the news. Listeners would be wise to get turned on to "Turn Off the News (Build a Garden)," a strong step forward for Nelson and his versatile band.

Nelson, the son of country legend Willie Nelson who sounds more than a bit like his dad, takes his band on a journey through multiple genres on the new album, including country, rock, soul, folk and R&B.

Along the way he gets help from a host of A-list stars including his old man, Neil Young, Sheryl Crow and Kesha.

The title track is a standout in a record full of strong songs, with the 30-year-old Nelson taking on the role of sage, looking for a way to bring people together in this era of division.

"Turn off the news and raise your kids / Give them something to believe in," he sings. "Teach them how to be good people / Give them hope that they can see."

On the duet "Civilized Hell," it's almost hard to tell when Lukas stops and his dad picks it up. But, as they sing about being rebels and liking it, they make clear they have more in common than their voices.

Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real have been on a roll: "Turn Off the News" comes on the heels of their standout work on the "A Star Is Born" soundtrack (they also appear in the film) and the boys will open for the Rolling Stones this summer.

— Scott Bauer
Associated Press



Willie Nelson

Ride Me Back Home
(Sony Legacy)

Willie Nelson's latest studio offering, "Ride Me Back Home," is a relaxed, joyous collection that finds Nelson reflecting, explicitly, on age and its toll — complaining, in fact, about the way time has left his face so lined — but free of any self-pity.

It's more of a celebration than some of his recent albums, and more of a showcase for his deceptively simple guitar work, which still carries an emotional wallop with its easy tone and subtlety.

Nelson vividly evokes the landscapes of the west, particularly in the title track, a paean to the days before horses were fenced in, but also takes listeners to Ellis Island in New York Harbor in a stunning and relevant cover of Guy Clark and Roger Murrah's "Immigrant Eyes."

There are also three new tunes Nelson wrote with producer Buddy Cannon. The most meaningful is "Come On Time," which describes a personal competition with time that the singer knows he can't possibly win. "You sure have put me in my place," he concedes. More defiant is "One More Song to Write," which sounds very much like the work of a man who wants to embrace more of life.

It is odd that Nelson, at 86, sounds as if his singing and guitar playing are almost effortless. It stems in part from his natural phrasing, and the familiarity of his voice, a staple in so many lives for decades. It also has something to do with the sense of comfort he conveys. He's past looking for drama, for conflict and its resolution. It's as if he's visiting with his fans, putting his feet up, and letting it fly.

— Gregory Katz
Associated Press



WEEKEND: MUSIC



MORE THAN A MEME STAR

Lil Nas X performs at the CMA Music Festival on June 8 in Nashville.

JASON KEMPEN, GETTY IMAGES/TNS

Lil Nas X gives a glimpse of his potential with impressive debut EP

By MIKAEL WOOD
Los Angeles Times

Six months after he posted the song on the internet, three months after Billboard said it wasn't a country song and two months after it went to No. 1 on the Hot 100 — where it's stayed ever since, fending off would-be chart-toppers from Taylor Swift and Ed Sheeran — Lil Nas X's "Old Town Road" has finally been embraced by the Nashville establishment.

At this month's annual CMA Fest, the 20-year-old rapper and singer from Atlanta performed his viral smash with help from Keith Urban, the Country Music Association's reigning entertainer of the year. A few days later, Old Crow Medicine Show covered "Old Town Road" during an episode of the venerable Grand Ole Opry broadcast live from Bonnaroo.

The overdue love came just as Lil Nas X prepared for the June 21 release of "7," the major-label debut EP that will determine whether his left-field country-trap hit marks the beginning of a long career or the end of a short one. Here's a twist worthy of the delightfully unpredictable ride he's been on so far: With Nashville on his side at last, Lil Nas X has up and left country music behind.

Only one track on "7" even approaches the down-home sound of "Old Town Road" — and with mariachi horns and a surf-guitar lick beneath his exaggerated cowboy's drawl, "Rodeo" is roots music of a decidedly different kind. Rather than duplicate his breakout song — which after picking up steam on social media burst fully into the mainstream in a remix featuring Billy Ray Cyrus — Lil Nas X here tries out a bunch of different styles, including pop-punk, grunge and EDM. The result rivals Billie Eilish's album as the debut of the year.

A savvy digital-era operator who categorized "Old Town Road" as a country song on SoundCloud because he knew it would stand out that way, Lil Nas X recognizes that Nashville's initial resistance was a boon. Billboard's booting it from the country chart (because it didn't embody "enough elements of today's country music") brought attention to the song in a super-crowded marketplace; more important, it gave this cute, cheerful kid the air of a creative freedom fighter.

So it makes perfect sense that he's go searching for new boundaries to bust. "Y'all think they got let me on the rock charts?" he recently tweeted along with a video of himself dancing to his song "Bring U Down" — a neat distillation of the complicated questions his success has raised about race, heritage and cultural ownership. "7" channels some of that renegade energy, as on "Kick It," where



Lil Nas X
7 (Columbia)

he references the Billboard incident in the scoffing tone of someone telling his co-workers about a boss's reprimand.

Yet he's no longer the unconnected bedroom amateur who made "Old Town Road" from a beat he bought online for 30 bucks. A clear contender for best new artist at the 2020 Grammy Awards, Lil Nas X has quickly gone pro; "7" contains input from high-level music-industry fixtures such as Ryan Tedder, who's written and produced for Beyoncé and Adele, and Boi-1da, known for his work with Drake. What's impressive about the EP is not that he's managed to survive in this new environment; it's that he's thriving.

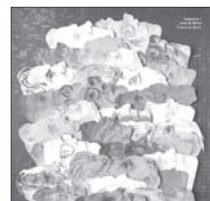
These songs, simply put, are great: vivid, funny, full of feeling and supremely catchy, even if they don't offer a clear picture of who Lil Nas X is offstage or off-screen. Like "Old Town Road," they're short — around two minutes apiece. (He whistles in more than one of them.) But within those tight structures he's flexing new muscles. In "Panini" he sings in a weathered rock-dude whine over a throbbing trap beat; the credits acknowledge the song's interpolation of Kurt Cobain's vocal melody from Nirvana's "In Bloom." "F9mily (You & Me)," produced by Travis Barker of Blink-182, has fuzzy Warped Tour guitars and a groove that goes half-time at one point as though designed for a mosh pit.

"Kick It" is slower and blearier, with layers of processed synth and horn sounds; "Bring U Down," with Tedder, rides a monster bass riff. And then there's "C'tsure (You Like)," a gorgeous hip-house track produced by Boi-1da and Allen Ritter in which Lil Nas X croons so tenderly you can practically see him in the studio booth, eyes closed, headphones clamped around his head. Of all the things we might've expected from this sly meme wizard, one of 2019's most moving songs had to be among the least likely.

Lil Nas X has clearly been thinking about where he fits into pop — about how to fill the space "Old Town Road" created for him before he even had a chance to figure out what he'd like to tell us. "Say to me what you want from me," he pleads in "Panini," while "C'tsure" finds him pondering his newfound celebrity. "No more real life for me," he predicts with a mix of excitement and anxiety.

Well, we'll see. The Walmart yodeling boy probably thought the same was true for him. But at a moment when popular music, especially hip-hop, is moving faster than it ever has — when form doesn't always wait for content to catch up — Lil Nas X's assured execution of these varied ideas feels like the right way to buy himself at least a few more months of unreality.

Giddy-up.



Reunion of Iron & Wine, Calexico worth wait

By RAGAN CLARK
Associated Press

Reuniting on "Years to Burn" (Sub Pop), their first full-length project since 2005, Calexico and Iron & Wine remind audiences why they initially collaborated.

Sam Beam, better known by his stage name Iron & Wine, has been a sensation in the indie world since the early 2000s. Calexico, with main members Joey Burns and John Convertino, is a Southwestern rock band with influences from mariachi to jazz. Together, the two are perfectly complementary.

Beam brings his own talents to the table — a raspy whisper of a voice, telling stories and pouring out lyrics wrought with meaning. These talents are only further enhanced by those of Calexico, adding texture and depth with their musical composition.

Differentiating itself from the "In the Reins" EP, on which the acts first collaborated, "Years to Burn" feels more self-assured, like a group of musicians comfortable playing together and not afraid to experiment.

"The Bitter Suite" serves as the perfect example of this talent realized. The eight-minute track split into three parts opens with a distinctively Calexico Spanish couplet, followed by an instrumental jam and finishing with a part that sounds like a separate song entirely. The third section would feel disjointed were it not for two lines buried in the verses — "There are dreams wild enough to pass the time" and "This dead bird wants the wings he can't recall" — the same two lines sung in Spanish at the song's start.

The title track has all of Beam's usual delicacy, yet there is more to explore, as soft trumpet pushes through the melding vocals of Beam and Burns. "Midnight Sun" is one of the few tracks written by Calexico, but it feels just as at home within the album. With a folklike theme and elusive, thoughtful lyrics, it could have just as easily been written by Beam. The songwriting styles of both fall into step, seamlessly.

The reunion feels a long time coming for two groups so wonderfully in sync and complementary. Hopefully, audiences won't have to wait so long for their next collaboration to unfold.

WEEKEND: BOOKS

As Carter discusses role as Pentagon chief

By DAN LAMOTHE
The Washington Post

Then-Defense Secretary Ash Carter was in a meeting at the White House when a National Security Council staff member shoved a surprise his way. Amid debate over the future of the U.S. detention center at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, the staffer handed out a proposed timetable that would force Carter to make a decision on the transfer of a detainee within a finite number of days.

"This tactic of springing a document on people without warning or vetting — known as 'table dropping' — had always been offensive to me," Carter writes in his memoir of his time at the Pentagon. "It violates all the rules of good process and fair treatment. I picked up the paper, crumpled it into a ball, and threw it at the White House staffer who had given it to me, saying, 'Don't table-drop s—.'"

The anecdote — reported previously in less colorful terms — is one of several revealing stories that Carter includes in his book, "Inside the Five-Sided Box: Lessons From a Lifetime of Leadership in the Pentagon."

Carter, now director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard, said he wrote the book as a "user's guide" for understanding the Defense Department. Carter also airs his frustrations about Congress and the media, praises some of the senior officials who worked with him, and explains the background of some of the most significant deci-



Courtesy of Evan Scales

In "Inside the Five-Sided Box," former Defense Secretary Ash Carter takes readers behind the scenes to reveal the inner workings of the Pentagon, its vital mission, and what it takes to lead it.

sions he made.

Carter became President Barack Obama's fourth and final defense secretary in February 2015, stepping in at a time that

included much of the war against the Islamic State, continued.

The answer turns out to be the president attempted to withdraw U.S. forces, and Carter's historic

decision to open all jobs in the military to any women who could meet the requirements.

After leaving their jobs, Carter's predecessors all aired frustrations over being micromanaged by the Obama National Security Council staff. Carter addresses the issue with nuance, writing that while "staff munchkins" and "ideologues" at the White House sometimes caused problems, he took steps to avoid being micromanaged.

While former national security adviser Tom Donilon viewed the Pentagon "as a kind of dark star across the Potomac that needed to be reined in," Carter writes, Donilon's successor, Susan Rice, "took a more congenial approach" that included "having the right conversations" with the Pentagon chief. Nonetheless, meetings that Rice ran, Carter writes, had "serious problems from my point of view," as people with "mixed levels of knowledge and experience" suggested ideas in a practice that "I began to refer to as 'playing with little tin soldiers.'"

Through a spokeswoman, Rice declined to comment. Carter can seem disingenuous at times. At one point, he writes that there have been cutbacks to media coverage of major war zones, while leaving out that the Defense Department under his watch rarely allowed journalists to embed with U.S. troops during the campaign against ISIS, citing logistical challenges and diplomatic sensitivities. He also writes that the media was "eager to play gotcha" when it questioned why the Obama administration avoided acknowledging that U.S. troops faced combat in the ISIS campaign.

After reading the book, I asked Carter about those comments, and he backpedaled a bit. He

said he didn't think "the press was being unfair, in retrospect." Journalists were just "pointing out a discrepancy that shouldn't have been," he said, when they reported on administration officials who did not acknowledge that some Americans engaged in combat along with Iraqi and Syrian troops, who made up the bulk of the ground forces. "I don't know if it does any good at this point," Carter said. "But you were seeing something that I wasn't quite seeing, which was that there was reluctance at the White House to talk about troops in combat. I didn't think that was right, and I didn't want to do that."

In the book, Carter provides some fresh details on his decision to allow women to take up all roles in the military. He writes that he and Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, agreed that Dunford would not appear alongside Carter when he announced the decision, because Dunford had recommended while serving as commandant of the Marine Corps to keep some jobs closed to women. "If the press was going to criticize the decision, I wanted them to criticize me, no one else — and I particularly did not want Joe to be caught in the middle," writes Carter, who lauds Dunford as one of the finest leaders he has ever known.

Of Obama, Carter writes that his "strengths greatly outweigh his weaknesses," and that he believed the president was willing to hear him out and occasionally change his mind. While Carter thought Obama's decision to withdraw U.S. troops from Afghanistan on a planned timetable was unwise, he eventually recommended to the president in 2015 that he keep some troops deployed there, and Obama did so.

'Armies of Deliverance' interprets Union and Confederate aims during Civil War

By GREGORY DOWNS
Special to The Washington Post

Everyone knows that Confederates fought the Civil War to preserve and extend the slave system that produced their wealth and shaped their society. But what, exactly, did white Northerners fight for? In her often-riveting "Armies of Deliverance," Elizabeth R. Varon answers that question in a new way, with important ramifications for how we understand the nation's most significant conflict, the meaning and legacy of slavery politics and the disappointments of postwar Reconstruction.

Because Confederates launched the first assaults of the Civil War, and because Confederates so eagerly trumpeted defense of slavery, Northern motivations can seem irrelevant. Confederates attacked the United States, and the United States fought back. Yet historians have debated Northern motivations vigorously over the past few decades because those motivations say a good deal about why the Civil War came, what kind of war it was and what its impact would be upon U.S. society. One loose definition group of historians argues that most white Northerners

aimed primarily to restore the Union, to preserve the nation and not to transform it. Other historians, meanwhile, claim that white Northerners generally sought to extend freedom by creating a new nation without slavery.

The answer turns out to be on which Northerners one examines — common soldiers, female teachers and nurses, free black activists, Ohio Valley politicians, officers in high command — and how one evaluates inherently slippery evidence about motivation.

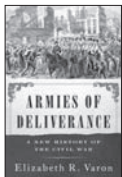
This debate has real ramifications for how we understand the Civil War era. Did secessionists have genuine reason to fear white Northern intentions? Was the war restrained, or did it approach a total war? And did the Civil War fundamentally transform the lives of the 4 million enslaved Americans and undermine the nation's foundations in white supremacy? Historians who emphasize the desire to restore the union generally argue that se-

cessionists miscalculated white Northern intentions and that many white Northerners saw their job as returning, not remaking, white Southerners, even secessionists. Thus, they argue, white Northerners favored restraint during and after the Civil War to ease the reintegration of white Southerners. Those historians who emphasize the freedom story are more likely to see Southern secession as a reasoned response to transformative Northern goals, to trace increasingly bold war measures and to narrate ambitious plans for national re-creation in Reconstruction.

The argument between scholars on either side of the union and freedom debate is important but in danger of becoming repetitive. So it is a relief to watch Varon strive elegantly to escape that binary perspective and establish her own interpretive framework for white Northern motivations. Her answer is deliverance. Christians, North and South, looked to biblical stories of deliverance to explain how society could be transformed. For Confederates, deliverance was simple: They would be delivered from the tyranny of Northern political opinion. Enslaved people similarly saw deliverance in stark terms: escape from the tyranny of masters.

But how did white Northerners understand deliverance? Varon argues that many of them believed that white Southerners needed deliverance from their "scheming leaders," the despotic planters who shut down public debate and dominated the political system. Once freed, the great mass of white Southerners would begin to think for themselves and, inevitably, emulate the prosperous and free North. White Southerners' political independence would then free the nation from the sway that planters exercised over politics and policy, a sway Northerners denigrated as a despotic political system. Deliverance, Varon writes, "resolved the tensions within the Union over war aims" between conservative Democrats and anti-slavery activists because a language of deliverance "could serve so many ends."

It supported everything from conciliatory war measures to a deep-seated popular desire for vengeance. While Varon doesn't quite deliver on her argument about deliverance, she narrates battles and campaigns with an unusually deft, at times even gorgeous touch. This is some of the finest battle writing around, and a sweeping analysis of both United States and Confederate strategy and tactics.



WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

"Dumbo": The original 1941 animated Disney classic film showed how the little elephant with floppy ears came to realize he was not a misfit through the support of his family and a close friend. The story was written decades ago but remains just as legitimate in today's era of so much bullying.

Instead of embracing that story, director Tim Burton opted to transform "Dumbo" into a live-action over-the-top examination of greed through what comes across as a demented version of Disneyland. So many story threads exist that nothing emerges as the central core.

At the top of the list of the monumental mistakes Burton and screenwriter Ehren Kruger ("Ghost in the Shell") make is changing the film from one where the animals speak to focusing on the human characters. They should have taken a look at the wonderful job Jon Favreau did with making a live-action version of "The Jungle Book." The animation to create Dumbo is done so well that all the circus animals could have been created via computers to make a far more interesting film.



Disney

Eva Green is part of the human cast of the remake of "Dumbo," now on DVD.

"Cinderella": If you are looking for a superb film from Disney, the animated tale is being rereleased to mark the 70th anniversary. The production is so important in story and dazzling in design it was recently added to the National Film Registry.

This is a masterpiece of film animation that should be in every collection.

Also available on DVD:

"Poison Rose": A hard-drinking Los Angeles detective (John Travolta) must face a dangerous crime boss (Morgan Freeman) while looking for a missing woman.

"Manhunt": Martin Clunes stars in this three-part drama based on the memoirs of former London Metropolitan police detective DCI Colin Sutton.

"Furie": A trafficking ring ends up the target of the mother of one of the girls they kidnap. Veronica Ngo stars.

"The Hummingbird Project": Jesse Eisenberg and Alexander Skarsgard star in this tale of two men who love to take big gambles.

"Detective Montalbano: Episodes 33 & 34": Murder, betrayal, office politics and temptation is all in a day's work for Detective Salvo Montalbano in this Italian crime drama.

"Marcella: Season 2": Anna Friel portrays a London detective who manages to do her job despite experiencing violent blackouts.

"Night of the Creeps": An alien experiment crashes to Earth in 1959 and infects a young college student. Originally released in 1986.

"Maze": Plans are made to rescue 38 members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army from a maximum-security jail.

"Poldark: The Complete Collection": An 18th century English army officer (Robin Ellis) finds the trials at home just as dangerous as what he faced in war. Set includes all 29 episodes.

"Fatso": The 1980 comedy features Dom DeLuise as a man dealing with a weight problem.

—Rick Bentley/Tribune News Service

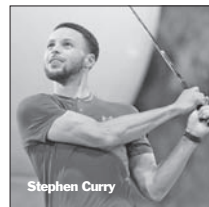


ABC photos

"Holey Moley" elevates mini-golf to a crazy competition series with Rob Riggle, Joe Tessitore, Jeannie Mai and pro basketball star Stephen Curry. Each of the 10 episodes features 12 mini-golfers facing off. At the end of each episode, one winner earns \$25,000, a "Golden Putter" trophy and a truly ugly "Holey Moley" plaid jacket. Above: contestant Mariana Bonetti.

Small ball

'Holey Moley' makes mini-golf an extreme reality TV competition for everyday folk, backed by pro hoops star Stephen Curry



Stephen Curry

By FRANK LOVECE
Newsday

Is "Holey Moley" a game show where you whack a mole? Get dipped in Mexican chocolate sauce? Play a round of extreme obstacle-course mini-golf?

It's that last one — and, really, is "extreme obstacle-course mini-golf" any more likely for a prime-time show than the other possibilities? And that sense of the absurd is exactly what creator Chris Cullen and fellow executive producer Jeron Smith were going for in the satiric competition that premiered last week stateside, with comedian Rob Riggle and veteran sportscaster Joe Tessitore giving straight-faced, dryly humorous play-by-play and TV personality Jeannie Mai as sideline commentator.

"The inspiration came from two avenues," says Cullen, 36, co-founder of the show's production company, Eureka. "We looked around at these big physical competitions like 'American Ninja Warrior' and 'Ultimate Beastmaster,' he says, "and one thing that became really apparent are the people on these shows are aspirational but not relatable — super-fit gym junkies. We wanted to explore a sport that the Everyman can play. And miniature golf seemed this untapped sport for that.

Everyone has a fond memory about miniature golf. So we loved that idea of taking that nostalgia and amping it up to the next level."

Perhaps "sport" is less the right term than "recreational activity," but the competitors on the 10-hole course take the silliness seriously, even when traversing humorously named obstacles like a slippery "glacier" ("Slip n' Putt"), up which golfers must clamber in order to reach the ball, or whirling windmill blades ("Dutch Courage") that not just the ball but the golfer must pass through.

"Every competitor on 'Holey Moley' is really passionate about miniature golf," says the Sydney-born Cullen. The 12 contestants each episode, where two golfers per hole play single-elimination matches to reach the final three, each "really, really wants to win" the \$25,000 prize. "I think if the contestants didn't take it seriously it wouldn't work. And if we played it totally serious like 'American Ninja Warrior,' it would seem forced."

Which doesn't mean the cartoony course — built on a large ranch in Santa Clarita, Calif. — isn't seriously challenging: It was built and in conjunction with Eureka designed by the Los Angeles-based company The ATS Team, which

creates obstacle courses and other large-scale fanciful environment for "American Ninja Warrior," "The Titan Games," "Big Brother," "The Amazing Race" and other shows.

Indeed, an athlete, NBA star and avid golfer Stephen Curry, is one of the forces behind "Holey Moley." "Stephen has always wanted to do a show rooted in golf," says Smith, 33, who had served for over a year as deputy director of the White House Office of Digital Strategy under President Barack Obama and currently runs Curry's production company, Unanimous Media.

Was Curry actually thinking mini-golf? "He didn't specify," Smith shrugs. "Golf is a passion" no matter the form, he says.

And you should have seen the holes that didn't make it to the construction stage, he adds.

"There was one where you were 20 feet up in the air and there's water underneath you and you're on a platform with concentric circles that are moving in different directions," leaving gaps where you could fall into the drink. "And you have to wait until all the surfaces align and then run to the hole. I don't remember if we even had a name for that."

How about "Holey Moley! I Don't Want to Drown!" Maybe this is a sport, after all.

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS



ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREA VILLARI/Stars and Stripes

BY JENNA BIRCH

Special to The Washington Post

Binge-watching, otherwise known as the act of streaming many television episodes in one sitting, is more common and doable than ever. New and buzzy series are constantly added to Netflix, Hulu, etc. You can stream the entire multiseason backlog of shows such as “Game of Thrones,” “Billions” and “Big Little Lies” on HBO or Showtime anytime you’d like.

Though that might sound glorious to TV fans, it’s a bit worrisome to health experts across the country. With so much content available, and so much screen time becoming the norm — replacing hours devoted to fitness, socializing and sleeping — the potential health implications of binge-watching are becoming more obvious.

According to several experts, binge-watching can affect your cardiovascular system, your vision, your socialization and your sleep patterns — all of which can lead to other problems.

The research on the health effects of binge-watching is still in its infancy, but a few studies have raised concerns. According to a 2017 study published in the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, avid binge-watchers reported poor sleep quality, increased fatigue and more insomnia symptoms. Michigan State University researchers presented a link between binge-watching and poor lifestyle choices such as opting for unhealthy meals, unhealthy snacks and sedentary behaviors at the 67th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association in 2017.

Though there’s still more research to be done on the effects of our culture’s shift toward multihour TV sessions, here’s what experts believe can happen to a person’s health if binge-watching remains the norm.

According to several experts, binge-watching can affect your cardiovascular system, your vision, your socialization and your sleep patterns — all of which can lead to other problems. For Sophia Tolliver, a family medicine physician at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, the first concern “is how sedentary you can become,” she says. “Studies show that sitting for long periods of time can increase one’s risk for metabolic syndrome, which can increase your risk of heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes.”

In a 2018 study, researchers found that prolonged sitting for binge-watching is similar to prolonged sedentary behavior for long-haul flights or illness: It can increase your risk of developing conditions such as deep-vein thrombosis, a blood clot in the leg that can be fatal if it breaks

off and travels to the heart or lungs. In the study, even ultimately achieving the recommended amount of physical activity was not enough to reverse the risk of clots during TV binges.

Tolliver also notes that binge-eating and binge-watching often go hand-in-hand. “Marathon sessions of TV, and associated mindless snacking, can lead to increased risk of obesity,” Tolliver explains. “In addition, research shows the majority of individuals binge-watch alone,” she says. “Studies have connected a lack of socialization to increased risks of heart disease and stroke, not to mention, fewer significant social relationships may increase the rates of depression and other mood disorders.”

Ronald Chervin, a sleep neurologist and director of Michigan Medicine’s Sleep Disorders Centers, says watching multiple episodes on Netflix before sleeping may cause you to lose more sleep, and beyond that night. “Electronic screens emit broad-spectrum light, including blue light,” he says. “In addition to delaying the release of melatonin, which keeps you awake, the blue light can actually reset your circadian rhythms to a later schedule.”

Because humans “have evolved to do best on a near-24 hour sleep cycle,” Chervin says, the shift to a later cycle can cause difficulty falling asleep, difficulty waking up and a general feeling of sleep deprivation. “We also see people who wake up in the middle of the night, and can’t go back to sleep, so they start watching television,” Chervin says. “There’s a wakeful element of social interaction to watching TV — people are talking, the adrenaline starts flowing. Watching in the night just cements the habit of being awake during times you shouldn’t be.”

Sleep deprivation has been associated with a number of health risks, according to Brad Lander, a clinical psychologist at Ohio State’s medical center: “depression,

memory deficits, lack of coordination, accident proneness, heart problems and more.”

Finally, there’s also reason to be concerned about digital eyestrain. According to the Vision Council, 80 percent of Americans use digital devices for more than two hours a day, and 59 percent of them report eyestrain, neck and shoulder pain, dry eyes, headaches and blurred vision.

Lander says there’s nothing inherently wrong with the occasional TV binge. “Television has some positive psychological effects,” he says. “The problem is when you do it too much.” Though Lander says how much screen time is too much varies from person to person depending on “genetics, state of mind, age, personal traits and many other things,” there are still plenty of ways to set limits on your binge-watching to circumvent the biggest health risks.

First of all, a binge should never last hours without any movement at all. “Take regular stretch breaks,” Lander says. “Move around, every 30 minutes is best, or watch while standing for part of it.” Tolliver suggests building physical activity into your streaming schedule — and planning on it afterward. “Take a break in the middle,” she says. “Don’t be afraid to hit the pause button and do something else. Start or finish laundry, bake, walk the dog, go to the bathroom break.” After the binge, “walking or jogging are great ways to get moving,” she says. “Balance is key.”

And plan your snacks, she says. Prepare healthy foods such as cut vegetables or air-popped popcorn. Also, it’s best to binge-watch with others instead of making it an isolating habit that could strain your relationships. “Make it a fun activity with a partner or friend,” Tolliver says. “Have dialogue after each episode, talk about what you liked and disliked.”

WEEKEND: FAMILY



When summer's a bummer

For some kids, anxiety levels spike when school ends

By KATIE HURLEY

Special to The Washington Post

An 8-year-old girl sits on my couch, squeezing a stress ball. She's feeling anxious. She tells me, a psychotherapist, that she can't stop thinking about her worries. She tells me that she has 18 days left of school, and that it's not nearly enough.

With the end of the school year approaching, it's natural to think that she might be relieved. For this child, however, it's the opposite. She does enjoy some parts of the summer. She likes swimming, has fun with her family and doesn't miss homework. But with both of her parents working for most of the summer, she has to enroll in several weeklong day camps. This means constant transitions and new rules. Long weekends away with family and friends disrupt sleep routines. We think of the summer months as carefree and relaxing, but many kids actually experience an uptick in anxiety during the break. Anxious kids rely on carefully crafted routines, and too little structure or shifting routines can feel overwhelming.

There are several factors that can negatively affect anxious kids during the summer.

1. New, and not necessarily improved, daily routines. Kids with anxiety thrive in familiar settings with a fair amount of structure because they like to know what to expect. The trouble with summer is that routines generally change. Whether a child is enrolled in day camps, overnight camps or even staying home, the rules and expectations change. The lack of predictability and structure can trigger worry and be overwhelming. It can also result in meltdowns.

2. Overscheduling. Parents may see the break as an opportunity to help their kids step outside their comfort zones by loading them up with shiny new experiences. "Many parents view the summer months as a time for children to 'catch up,' improve or gain an edge, and enroll them in numerous classes or activities, leaving little or no time for kids to relax and rejuvenate," says Susan Newman, a social psychologist and author of "Little Things Long Remembered: Making Your Children Feel Special Every Day." "Piling on and filling time only adds to their stress and anxiety that, ideally, summer break is theoretically designed to reduce."

3. Changes in eating habits. Summer is often treated as a time for bending the rules and enjoying ice cream cones, Popsicles and other sugary sweets. Although a little bit of indulgence is always fun, too much of a good thing can affect how kids feel both physically and emotionally.

4. Changes in sleep habits. It's common for kids to have periods where they don't sleep well, but patterns of poor or inconsistent sleep can negatively affect their mental health.

5. Too much screen time. Many kids enjoy technology and use screens to connect with their friends or fill their downtime.

A recent study found an association, though, between more screen use and a small increased risk of anxiety and depression.

6. Travel worries. Family travel can be a lot of fun and create life-time memories, but it can also feel overwhelming. From flight anxiety to travel delays to sleeping in strange places and dealing with change, travel isn't always easy for little worriers.

Although there's no easy fix, parents can take steps to help prepare anxious children for the changes that occur during the summer.

1. Get back to basics. Balanced nutrition (including occasional s'mores), plenty of water and exercise, a consistent sleep routine and regular periods of downtime and unstructured play are essential for helping your anxious child thrive during the summer.

2. Maintain the usual sleep routine. Although the sun sets a little later during the summer, your child still needs the same amount of sleep. Consider white noise, relaxing music, blackout shades or even a weighted blanket to help ease your child into sleep.

3. Set healthy boundaries. Screens certainly feel like a lifesaver during long flights or car rides, but the key to teaching moderation is to practice it. And remember, shows and video games that may seem relatively benign may still be upsetting for some children.

4. Spend time together. Day trips and travel are fun, but you don't need to spend a lot of money to create lasting summer memories with your kids. More often than not, kids tell me they just want to spend time with their parents. They don't really worry about how that time is spent.

5. Plan for travel. It might be easier for you to do the packing, but asking your child to help gives him some control. Anxious kids tend to prefer to bring certain comfort items and clothing when they leave home, so ask your child for input.

6. Slow down. Although many kids need day camps during working hours, there's no need to overload them with extra activities and new experiences. Look for local camps that focus on outdoor play and include downtime.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



The seasonal stress of swimsuit selection

Summer, this balmiest of seasons, evokes sunny scenes of kids running through sprinklers, smoky whiffs of charcoal grills, soft sensations of waves lapping bare toes and sweet sounds of crickets on steamy starlit nights.

But summertime is not all popsicles and dandelions. Actually, this beloved season heralds an event that strikes dread in the hearts of women like me.

No, I'm not talking about innocuous summer pests like blood-sucking mosquitoes. I'm not referring to nuisances such as hairdo-wrecking humidity. I'm not even referencing the annoying obligation of vacationing with relatives.

I'm talking about—brace yourselves, ladies—bathing suit shopping.

After nine months of covering our delicate and sometimes ample flesh with layers of protective clothing and binding spandex, we women are expected to abruptly strip down and let it all hang out.

Social mores dictate that at the beach or pool, I should don an itty-bitsy garment that exposes almost everything. However, after birthing three large babies and two decades of yo-yo dieting, my abdomen has more rolls than a Mega Pack of Cottonelle. I can barely (pun intended) stomach (pun intended again) the idea of a one-piece.

A bikini? Entirely out of the question.

Thus, every year, I am on a quest to find a new suit for the summer season that lifts, separates, covers and conceals. Of course, these are generally the skirted kind worn by older women with bunions and flowered swim caps who play bridge on Tuesdays and clint denture cream oopons. However, I am determined to buy a garment that does not appear to have been purchased with a senior discount.

So, I hit the local department store, grab an assortment of bathing suits with a combination of style and function and head for the dressing room.

Ah, the dressing room. That bastion of garish fluorescent lighting and fun house mirrors, where women come to hate themselves. I hang the plastic number given to me by the attendant on one hook, the bathing suits on the other, and begin to undress.

Federal law requires (or maybe just a local ordinance ... either way, I'm fairly certain you can get arrested for violating it!) that one must wear underwear when trying on bathing suits in the store dressing room. However, it is next to impossible to fully appreciate a bathing suit when one is wearing it over a pair of humongous cotton briefs like mine. So I subject myself to the moment that every woman on earth seads under the unforgiving fluorescent lights. I face the mirror, stripped down to nothing but my large Jockeys for Her.

No matter that I undress at home every day of my life, I am always shocked by what I see in a department store dressing room mirror. I gasp audibly as my mind races, "What? Why is that so spongy? Is that a dent in my thigh? When did those get down there? Is that giggling? Is this hanging over? Seriously? Good Lord!"

Traumatized, I contemplate giving up on buying a new bathing suit, but always persevere when I remember that the worn-out elastic from last year's suit gives me a wedgie. One after the other, I squirm and wiggle my way into those little Lycra instruments of torture, hoping to find one that does not trigger my gag reflex.

Three suits later, I'm ready for my punch. Another highlights my back fat. A tummy control suit nearly ruptures my spleen. One shows my armpit chicken fat. Another gives me "old lady cleavage." And one has underwire that I fear might puncture my lung.

Finally, I find an ultra-supportive suit that is both flattering and has the added bonus of allowing me to breathe by taking frequent shallow gasps.

Eventually, I emerge from the dressing room, battered and broken, but not defeated. I toss the suit to the cashier, relieved that I have found a garment in which to enjoy the rejuvenating warmth of summer. My bathing suit shopping ordeal is finally over, and I survived.

At least until next year.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com
Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@googlemail.com

Anxious kids rely on carefully crafted routines, and too little structure or shifting routines can feel overwhelming.

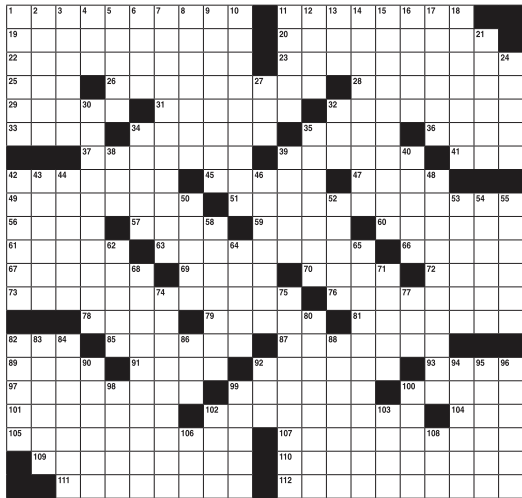
WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

NOT IN SO MANY WORDS BY JOEL FAGLIANO / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

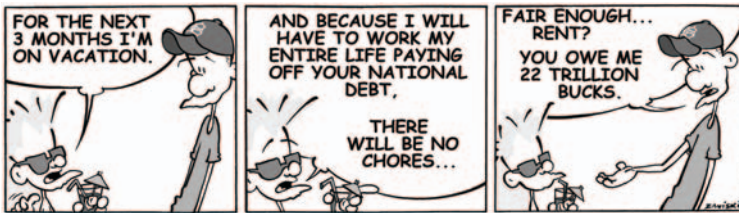
Joel Fagliano, 26, is the digital crossword editor of The New York Times and creator of the paper's daily Mini. Born and raised in Philadelphia, he often makes references to the city into his puzzles, such as "S&S-born here." This puzzle is unthemed, which means without preset answers that constrain the fill, it has a more open pattern of fresher, livelier vocabulary — all clued with wit and a fitting level of challenge. According to our records, it ties for the fewest number of answers (124) ever to appear in a Sunday Times crossword — W.S.

- ACROSS**
1 It was first officially designated in a 1966 Lyndon Johnson proclamation
11 Holders of tiny mirrors
19 Apple Store purchase
20 What studies show that men do more than women, conversationally
22 It might require a quick check
23 Star treatment
25 Male swan
26 Static, as an exercise
28 Access with a password
29 "Lord, show me ____"
31 World's largest cosmetics company
32 Post office?
33 Oscar winner Jared
34 Kitchen cabinet
35 Major academic achievements
36 "Yeah, whatever"
37 Having locks
39 Cocktail of tequila and grapefruit soda
41 Load
42 Specious arguer
- DOWN**
45 Risk taker
47 One taking the bait
49 Like Earth's orbit
51 2019, zodiacally
56 Mine entrance
57 Calle _____, landmark street in Miami's Little Havana
59 Arcade game based on a film of the same name
60 "You listening?"
61 N.Y.U.'s _____ School of the Arts
63 Got by
66 Traces left by burning candles
67 Complete fool
69 Call of the wild
70 Catch a break?
72 Promote
73 Deli machine
76 Auditorium section beneath the balcony
78 Word before web or chocolate
79 Bundle
81 Heather has two, in a children's book title
82 Overtime U.S. soccer prodigy Freddy
85 Dates not found on the calendar
87 Hot sauce
89 Bank takeback
91 Great work
- ACROSS**
13 ____ Dew (stylized brand name)
14 Stripped
15 Sinclair Lewis novel for which he received (but declined) the Pulitzer Prize
16 Parts of bluffs
17 Coaches
18 Nascar mishap
21 "My Neighbor ____" acclaimed animated film from Hayao Miyazaki
24 The "Tullius" of Marcus Tullius Cicero
27 Sci-fi weapon
30 Tied the knot
32 Org. for the Vegas Golden Knights
34 Sauce traditionally prepared in a mortar
35 Repeats mindlessly
38 Embarrassing sound when bending over
39 Fruits banded in wine
40 Tapped, as a cigarette
42 Delta Air Lines hub
43 Getting up there
44 Packered fabric
46 Many a local volunteer
48 Ticker symbol?
50 Meanspirited person
52 Best



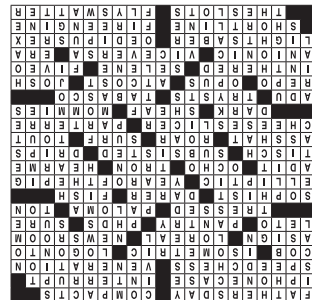
- ACROSS**
53 A ____ (based on logic)
54 Sinful
55 Brave deeds celebrated in verse
58 They're found among the reeds
62 Attacks vigorously
64 Goldman ____
65 An Emmy is awarded for the best one
- DOWN**
68 Many action-movie villains
71 White coat
74 Face-to-face interaction?
75 Recite from memory
77 Cable inits. for cinephiles
80 Muslim niqab, e.g.
82 Standard Windows typeface
- ACROSS**
83 Co-owner of Paddy's Pub on "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia"
84 Not loose
86 Afrique du ____
88 Desiccated
90 "Pick me! Pick me!"
92 Agcy. created after the Manhattan Project
94 No longer interested
95 Placid
- DOWN**
96 Scam artist
98 Between: Fr.
99 Begotes
100 The birds and the bees, e.g.
102 Clothes-dryer attachment
106 Part of a Twitter page
108 Private instructor: Abbr.

GUNSTON STREET



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FACES



BRIAN ACH, INVISION/AP

Daniel Baker, known as Desus Nice, left, and Joel Martinez, aka The Kid Mero, host the TV series "Desus & Mero" on Showtime.

Late-night Showtime

Talk show hosts Desus & Mero challenge the usual format

By GARY GERARD HAMILTON
Associated Press

Daniel Baker and Joel Martinez may be hosts of a late-night TV talk show that attracts A-list celebrities, but they don't feel like they're competing with the likes of Jimmy Fallon or Stephen Colbert.

The comedians, who go by Desus Nice & The Kid Mero, got their break in podcasts and they fill their Showtime slot with conversation, jokes, viral clips, celebrity slip-ups and offbeat local news stories. They call it "a hodgepodge of the full day's topics." It's spontaneous and less gimmicky than their higher-profile rivals.

"Other guys — shout out to them — but they have a formula," said Mero, the stage name of Martinez. "That's not what we wanted to do. We wanted to come and do something totally different. And even the term 'late-night show' — it applies to our show because it comes on late at night, but it's not your typical late-night show."

Fans stateside will get a chance to see them up close in person this summer when they hit the road, visiting cities like Houston, Los Angeles, Miami and more.

"The show is a live version of the podcast," said Desus. "At the beginning of the day, it started with our podcast and at the end of the day, it's going to be our podcast."

They're doing what they want on their own terms, the same traits that caught the eyes of Complex Media, which noticed their hysterical Twitter interaction and paired them up for a podcast that quickly turned to video.

That led to their popular show on Viceland, and now Baker and Martinez host "Desus & Mero on Showtime," the premium network's first late-night show.

"We're not a bunch of pundits breaking stuff down. We're just like, 'This is weird. This is weird. This is not how America works. But wow! What's going on?'" said Desus, the stage name of Baker.

Part of the charm of Desus & Mero is that they don't hide their New York-ness. Most on-air talent eliminates clothing, accents or vernacular that could alienate different parts of the country. But Desus and Mero not only embrace it, but turn the dial up.

"When the revolution comes, we going to kill all the rich people and eat them." Desus joked to an audience recently. "We're not rich, though. We from the Bronx. Being rich in the Bronx is like, what, 40 thou?"

'It's like the opposite of what everybody else is trying to do. Not that it's a goal that we set and said we're going to be different just for the sake of being different, but IT'S JUST THAT WE'RE DIFFERENT. We're not going to ask the same questions that the suit-and-tie guy on Fox News or MSNBC are going to ask.'

**Joel Martinez
aka The Kid Mero**

Joel Martinez
aka The Kid Mero

Although they might be newcomers to late night, they haven't shied from the action. While they shoot the breeze with everyone from actors to directors to recording artists, they've hit a sweet spot with politics.

They've toasted Kirsten Gillibrand at a bar, drank malt liquor in the park from bottles wrapped in brown paper bags with Pete Buttigieg and visited fellow Bronx resident Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in her Washington, D.C., office — she was their first Showtime guest.

"It's like the opposite of what everybody else is trying to do. Not that it's a goal that we set and said we're going to be different just for the sake of being different, but it's just that we're different," said Mero. "We're not going to ask the same questions that the suit-and-tie guy on Fox News or MSNBC are going to ask."

Also known as The Bodega Boys, the New York duo were influenced by the "looseness" of "The Arsenio Hall Show" in the '90s, the music segments of Dave Chappelle's "Chappelle's Show" and elements of "The Eric Andre Show."

"We definitely stand out, not only because we look different," Desus remarked, referring to their place as the only people of color currently hosting a late-night show. "We might be a little grittier, a little edgier than the other shows, but they're not really our competition."

What also makes their show unique is its writers room, which features Zive Fumudoh and Heben Nigatu — two black women.

"Getting people that get you and come from your world is super-important, especially for us, just coming up and being now on the platform that we are now," said Mero.

"You have women of color in the writer's room because that's a viewpoint that might not be represented at all in late-night," continued Desus.

"So you get the full 360-view on things that wouldn't even be on your radar. They'll bring it to us like, 'Did you see this?' And I'm like, 'Oh wow, this would never make it to my Twitter feed.' But then we could put it on the show and everyone is like, 'Oh wow, I didn't even know about this.'"

'Office' to leave Netflix in 2021

From wire services

Netflix is losing its most popular TV show, "The Office," in a sign of things to come as more TV and movie makers start their own streaming services and take back their offerings.

In a tweet Tuesday, Netflix said it was "sad" that NBC will no longer license "The Office" to Netflix, but added that Netflix will still have it for the next year and a half. NBCUniversal's streaming service is due to start in 2020. Starting in January 2021, the yet-unnamed NBC service will be the exclusive home in the U.S. of all nine seasons of the sitcom, which follows the hapless employees of the Dunder Mifflin paper company.

Although Netflix has been emphasizing original shows and movies, previously televised shows such as "The Office" are still popular, especially as people abandon traditional pay TV providers like cable and rely on streaming for such shows. "The Office" was the most viewed show on Netflix in 2018. "Friends" was No. 2 and "Grey's Anatomy" was No. 3.

Kardashian West faces backlash over Kimono line

Kim Kardashian West has received backlash on social media from people who object to what they say is appropriation of the traditional Japanese kimono in the name of her upcoming shapewear line.

The reality star, makeup mogul and budding lawyer announced the line, Kimono Solutionwear, on Tuesday. The line will come in a range of sizes and colors she showed off on Instagram.

Some Japanese critics on social media said the name, which West trademarked, is an inappropriate take on centuries-old kimono clothing.

There was no word on when the line would go on sale.

Spears' conservatorship sues blogger for defamation

The conservatorship that oversees Britney Spears' personal life and career has sued the creator of a blog devoted to the pop superstar.

The lawsuit filed Wednesday in Los Angeles alleges that Anthony Elia, who runs the website Absolute Britney, has falsely claimed the court-ordered conservatorship has been manipulating her Instagram account to make her appear more troubled than she actually is.

The blog and its social media accounts have played a key role in the so-called "Free Britney" movement, a group of fans who say she is being controlled against her will by her father Jaime, who serves as her conservator.

Other news

■ South Korean star couple Song Joong-ki and Song Hye-kyo are seeking a divorce to end their celebrity marriage of less than two years. Dubbed as "Song-Song couple," both have huge followings across Asia and elsewhere. They married in October 2017 after co-starring in the mega-hit TV drama "Descendants of the Sun."

■ Max Wright, the actor best known for portraying the father of the Tanner clan on the comedy series "ALF," died Wednesday of cancer. He was 75.

■ Edith Scob, the French actress whose illustrious career in film and theater spanned nearly six decades, died Wednesday at age 81.

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OPINION

At G-20, Trump can clarify his Iran policy

By BOBBY GHOSH

Bloomberg Opinion

Now that President Donald Trump has arrived at the Group of 20 summit in Osaka, Japan, many of his peers will want to discuss bilateral crises with him: China's Xi Jinping about their trade spat, Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan about the purchase of Russian missile defense systems, Japan's Shinzo Abe about Trump's bizarre notion about ending their bilateral defense pact. They will also want to hear from him about a crisis that affects them all: the confrontation with Iran.

That crisis has grown more acute since the group last gathered. Neutral shipping has been attacked, oil installations bombed, an American drone shot down, a supreme leader placed under sanctions. Despite protestations from Washington and Tehran that neither side wants war, the conclave in Osaka will rightly be anxious about the enormous human cost and great economic harm of such a conflict.

At their December meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Trump would have struggled to get a patient hearing about his position on Iran. He had only recently pulled the U.S. out of the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and the other signatories — the European Union, Germany, France, China, Russia and Britain — were still reeling from that move.

Meanwhile, Iran was still abiding by the bargain, allaying for hope that the deal could yet be salvaged without the U.S.

The other signatories can now harbor no illusions that they can keep the JCPOA alive without the U.S. No company in Europe, China or Russia dares to brave Amer-

ican sanctions. More important, Iran's recent reckless behavior has alarmed the Europeans — they have officially warned Tehran that breaking its JCPOA commitments would have serious consequences. They are not pleased with attacks on oil tankers either.

So Trump may find in Osaka as close as he will ever be to having a sympathetic audience. That makes it a good time to explain what his Iran policy is — and, just as important, what it isn't.

He should start by clarifying his ultimate objective. It can't be about regime change, something that economic sanctions rarely achieve, and nobody wants a war. Nor can it be simply about getting a better nuclear deal than the Obama administration — by extending the uranium-enrichment embargo by, say, 15 years.

If Trump wants to improve on Obama's deal, he must insist on a genuinely comprehensive pact, extending beyond Iran's potential nuclear threat to include its ballistic missile program, its promotion of terrorist groups and proxies across the Middle East, and other bad behavior. In exchange for such a grand bargain, he should offer more than Obama did — the removal of all sanctions, and the prospect of favorable trading terms with the U.S. and its allies.

He should add that compliance by Tehran would earn full Western backing for a pact between Iran and its regional rivals, Saudi Arabia and Israel, with the aim of ending their mutual hostility, and perhaps even incorporating voluntary arms limits in the treaties. (Serendipitously, the 2020 G-20 summit will be in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.)

The Iranians have frequently invoked the phrase "more for more" to promise concessions in exchange for the easing of

non-nuclear sanctions. Trump should give them, and the world, a clear picture of how he sees "more for more."

To receive a sympathetic hearing, Trump should show some sympathy, too — toward the millions of Iranians who share the pain of American sanctions.

He can point to the targeted sanctions on Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and top military commanders as proof that his main goal is to hurt the regime. To underscore this, he must announce full U.S. backing for a Swiss channel to deliver medical and other humanitarian goods to Iranians. And, if he is really serious, he could lift the ban on Iranians traveling to the U.S.

Will Iran go along with any of this? Not anytime soon, to judge by Khamenei's rejection of recent offers of mediation and negotiation.

But with every passing month that the sanctions hurt the Iranian economy, the ayatollah's position can only weaken. Trump should make it clear that he's in no hurry, and that the U.S. will not in the meantime respond unilaterally or disproportionately to the Islamic Republic's provocations. If Iran goes too far, he should tell his audience, it will deserve a response from them all.

Trump cannot hope to leave Osaka with a consensus behind his policy. He may not even extract an open endorsement from the Europeans. But if he can clarify his position, he will leave his summit colleagues less room to disagree with him — and the Iranian regime with no illusions about his intentions.

Bobby Ghosh is a columnist and member of the Bloomberg Opinion editorial board. He writes on foreign affairs, with a special focus on the Middle East and the wider Islamic world.

Democrats can do better than the Warren way

By STEPHEN STROMBERG

The Washington Post

If the first Democratic presidential debate is any measure, practically all the candidates who are not Elizabeth Warren seem to think they can distinguish themselves by sounding exactly like Elizabeth Warren, despite lacking the long record of being Elizabeth Warren. In a political epoch that rewards authenticity and boldness, candidate after candidate embraced the populism they believe Democratic voters desire.

Warren set the tone for the evening by railing against the drug companies, the oil companies and private prisons. She is right that some companies have behaved dishonorably. But she is wrong to make it seem as though, if there is a problem, some corporation somewhere must have caused it, and the only way to solve it is to find and break up that corporation.

When you've got an economy that does great for those with money and isn't doing great for everyone else, that is corruption, pure and simple," she said, apparently reducing wealth inequality to an evil plot cooked up by a few billionaires in a room. The question was about talking to people, including 60 percent of Democrats, according to debate moderator Savannah Guthrie, who think the economy is doing well.

What followed was a competition to see who could sound more Warren-esque.

Former Texas congressman Beto O'Rourke blasted "an economy that is rigged to corporations and to the very wealthiest."

Sen. Cory Booker, of New Jersey, distanced himself from his previous criticism

of politicians who single out companies for breaking up, attacking "pharmaceutical companies that often have monopolistic holds on drugs" — in other words, a legal patent — and bragging that "one of the most aggressive bills in the Senate to deal with corporate consolidation is mine."

Sen. Amy Klobuchar, of Minnesota, who has previously mocked candidates who promised free everything, stuck by her promise that she would not give everyone a free college because rich people can pay for their own college educations. But she would give everyone free community college. "If billionaires can pay off their yachts, students should be able to pay off their student loans," Klobuchar said.

The candidate who came closest to matching Warren's populist zinger for populist zinger was New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, probably because he started his rise to prominence as a Warren-like progressive. "You hear folks say there's not enough money. What I say to them every single time is, there's plenty of money in this world, there's plenty of money in this country. It's just in the wrong hands."

But, unfortunately for those candidates who tried to channel their inner Warren, there was nothing like the real thing. "I want to return government to the people, and that means calling out the names of the monopolists and saying I have the courage to go after them," Warren said. The monopolists? Vote Bull Moose!

There were a few exceptions to the trend, most notably former Maryland congressman John Delaney, who emphasized that he is a successful entrepreneur and offered an unspectacular sounding but solid

suite of policy changes to fight economic inequality. "We need a short-term strategy which is to put money in the pockets of workers with the earned-income tax credit, raising the minimum wage and creating family leave, and then we need to have a long-term strategy to make sure this country is competitive," he said.

Then again, Delaney's campaign is based on the idea that Americans do not want Elizabeth Warren; they want a wonky unknown former congressman from the Maryland suburbs.

The upshot of the evening was that, in the ongoing battle between Democrats who emphasize redistribution in a highly regulated economy and those who temper the need for redistribution and regulation with the need for economic growth so that the government is not merely redistributing a stagnating pie, the former candidates are winning.

A swath of Democrats thinks this is politically smart, in large part because they agree with the ideological movement it represents. Yet as The New York Times recently pointed out, the Democratic Party generally is more moderate than the obstreperous voices on Democratic Twitter. Democrats cannot ignore that they owe their current House majority to moderates in the suburbs, not the left wing's primary-the-unbelievers strategy of party-building. And they cannot neglect those sorts of voters if they wish to build an effective anti-Trump coalition. In other words, they must not foot themselves.

Stephen Stromberg is a Washington Post editorial writer. He specializes in domestic policy, including energy, the environment, legal affairs and public health.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Obama-era FHA moves continue to harm taxpayers *The Wall Street Journal*

In case you missed it, Quicken Loans this month agreed to pay a token \$32 million to settle a dubious housing lawsuit initiated by the Obama Justice Department. The real scandal is how the Obama administration extracted billions from mortgage lenders for sloppy underwriting on government-insured loans while loosening loan standards and setting up taxpayers for losses.

In 2015 the Justice Department sued Quicken under the False Claims Act for originating government-insured loans that allegedly didn't comply with Federal Housing Administration standards. Justice cherry-picked about 100 of the 250,000 or so FHA-insured mortgages that Quicken made between 2007 and 2011 that ostensibly overstated borrowers' income, among other underwriting lapses.

Yet the FHA has made more in fees and premiums on Quicken mortgages than it paid out, so the government wasn't harmed. Quicken also has among the lowest default rates of all large FHA lenders. A mere 0.66% of its FHA-insured loans are seriously delinquent, compared with the U.S. average of 1.43%.

Banks forked over more than \$7 billion when Justice passed the offeritory plate, but Quicken fought back. Federal Judge Mark Goldsmith this past spring ordered the two parties to mediation after significantly narrowing Justice's claims. Although Quicken founder Dan Gilbert had said he wouldn't settle, the \$32 million is less than 0.03% of the \$108 billion in FHA loans it has made since 2007 and is a small price for avoiding a trial.

Meantime, the lawsuits have crimped the FHA's business. JP Morgan CEO Jamie Dimon noted in 2017 that False Claims Act litigation "made FHA lending risky and costly prohibitive for many banks" and "led us to scale back our participation in the FHA lending program in favor of less burdensome lending programs."

Nineteen of the 20 top FHA lenders are now nonbanks. While more lending has moved online, banks may be better situated to make loans in low-income communities where they have branches. Banks also have more than 100 years of experience on customers that can enable them to do better underwriting.

FHA insures mortgages with down payments as low as 3.5% on loans up to \$727,000. The government insurer is supposed to make it easier for low-income folks to purchase a home, and its underwriting standards are lower than private insurers. But to bring in more business, the Obama administration eased underwriting standards even more.

In 2016 the FHA rescinded a rule requiring manual underwriting for borrowers with credit scores below 620 and a debt-to-income ratio exceeding 43%. Nonbank lenders have since been making more and more FHA-insured loans to low-income customers for more and more expensive homes. What could go wrong?

A quarter of FHA-insured borrowers have payments that exceed half of their income — more than at the peak of the housing bubble. The average borrower credit score has declined to 670, the lowest since 2008. In Anaheim, Calif., last week average \$80,000 in down payment assistance for first-time buyers.



REBECCA BLACKWELL/AP

Tania Vanessa Avalos, accompanied by her cousin, Milton, walks into a government office in Matamoros, Mexico, as she completes the paperwork necessary for the bodies of her husband, Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez, 25, and their nearly 2-year-old daughter, Valeria, to be returned home to El Salvador on Wednesday.

Defaults have been declining, but that's because wages are rising while home prices have increased about 5% to 6% on average for the last five years. If the economy and home prices take a turn for the worse, FHA's 2.8% capital cushion might not cover losses and taxpayers could wind up as the backstop. Count this as another way Team Obama's policies continue to do economic damage.

Restricting Americans' travel again won't improve Cuba *The Orange County (Calif.) Register*

Our continent-spanning country is large — and we contain multitudes, as Walt Whitman had it.

Since we are so big, we sometimes fall into the habit of thinking we are all that there is. The reality is we are just a part of the world, and we are a better people making better decisions when we remember that.

So when thinking about our relations with neighbors, it's well to remember that our longtime unilateral foreign policy toward Cuba is literally just that. Citizens of more than 160 other nations around the world can travel to the island anytime they wish to, smoke Cuban cigars, drink Cuban rum. It is only we citizens of the United States who can't readily do those things. Yet what has that policy done toward effecting reform ever since the awful Communist revolution pushed out the awful American-backed dictatorship 60 years ago?

Nothing. Five years ago, recognizing mere reality and hoping for some leverage on human and economic rights for Cubans, the Obama administration began lifting the travel ban for Americans and adjusting trade policies. Though Cuban aid and comfort to the despotic Venezuelan regime is wrong, saying so has made no difference. The European Union agrees with us about the need for reform, noting Cuba's "continuing flagrant violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms." But if a German wants to go sit on a Cuban beach, she can.

The Trump administration this month took a backward step when it restricted even group educational and cultural trips to the island. It also forbade cruise ship trips there by Americans — after 142,721 Ameri-

cans went to Cuba on cruises just this year, through April. The policy change, billed by the administration as aimed at stopping Cuban support for American adversaries in the Western Hemisphere, will instead just serve as political window dressing. It's a reactionary lurch in reverse that will surely be nixed by a future administration. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of curious Americans, goodwill ambassadors for our culture, will be needlessly prevented from visiting our neighbors.

Free trade and discussion have and will continue to achieve more than sanctions and restricting the liberty of American travelers.

Image of migrant, daughter should spur policy changes *San Francisco Chronicle*

Sometimes a photograph captures the inhumanity of the world in a way that words never could. Such was the case this week with the searing shot of Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez and his 23-month-old daughter, Valeria, face down in the muddy Rio Grande, after they had drowned in their determined quest for refuge in the United States.

The photo by Julia Le Duc, first published in the Mexican newspaper *La Jornada* then distributed around the globe by The Associated Press, was haunting in its detail. The toddler's right arm was curled around his neck. His black T-shirt was wrapped around her to hold her close as they crossed the river.

It was the most universal of human interactions: parent protecting child against danger, and child clinging to her ultimate source of safety. For the child's mother, who watched her loved ones swept away in the current, it was the most unthinkable of horrors.

It should tug at the conscience of all Americans.

The Salvadoran family had wanted to seek asylum the safe way — the legal way, as prescribed in U.S. and international law — by presenting themselves at the port of entry. The international bridge at Matamoros, Mexico, was closed that day. So they took a risk, as so many desperate refugees do, too often with tragic results.

That heartbreaking sight puts in perspective the U.S. customs policy of "metering" — severely reducing the number of

migrants who can request asylum on any given day — and the Trump administration's expressed intent to discourage people fleeing crime and poverty for a better life by complicating their options for legal entry. The 25-year-old Martinez had struggled to support his family on \$350 a month working at a Papa John's in El Salvador.

"They went for the American dream," his mother said.

This is not the first time a photo of a child has commanded the world's attention on crisis. There was the lifeless 3-year-old Syrian boy on the beach after the sinking of a refugee boat in 2015; the blood- and dust-covered Syrian 5-year-old pulled from a building bombed by the Russians the same year; the starving Sudanese girl being eyed by a vulture in 1993.

This one is on us. We can't look the other way. We must challenge the policies that led them to the river.

Transparency in medical costs doesn't solve systemic ills *Los Angeles Times*

The Trump administration continued to nibble away Monday at the problem of high health care costs, unveiling a set of proposals to bring more transparency to the industry's byzantine pricing practices. But like just about everything else the administration has done on health care affordability, the proposal would strike at best a glancing blow to rising costs. And paradoxically, it could wind up raising prices for some patients.

It's hard to argue with the idea that people should know how much their care will cost before they receive it, not after. The White House proposal would address that directly, administration officials said, by requiring insurers and health care providers to tell patients in advance what their out-of-pocket costs would be.

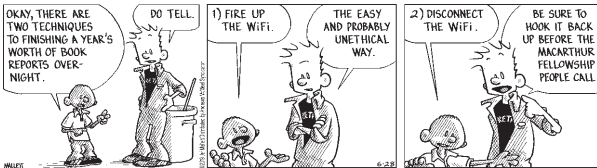
The initiative's main effort to hold down health care costs, though, would be to require hospitals to clearly and publicly disclose how much people actually pay for services there. In theory, people seeking nonurgent care — a knee replacement, say — could use the information to shop around for the most affordable hospital, promoting the kind of competition that drives down prices in normal markets.

It's not at all clear how helpful the information will be, however, in part because the proposal doesn't specify how much detail hospitals would have to release about their prices. The less detailed the hospitals' price lists are, the less help they give consumers to shop around. But the more detailed they are about the prices negotiated with insurers, the greater the risk that hospitals will discover when they're charging less than their competitors and raise their prices accordingly.

Beyond that, Americans pay a relatively small percentage of their health care costs out of pocket, even with steadily increasing deductibles. They typically depend on their doctors to tell them exactly what care they need. What's more, if they're seriously injured or ill, they may be in no position to look around for care. And in many communities, there aren't enough hospitals or physician groups to support real competition. All of those factors shield the health care industry from the sort of consumer pressure and market forces that the Trump administration wants to unleash.

Making a major dent in health care costs would require the administration to take a much bigger swing at the way health care is delivered and paid for in the United States. Why do we spend so much more than the residents of other countries do, even though the care doesn't yield consistently better outcomes? It's because prices are hidden. The president's proposal may prove helpful, but only on the margins.

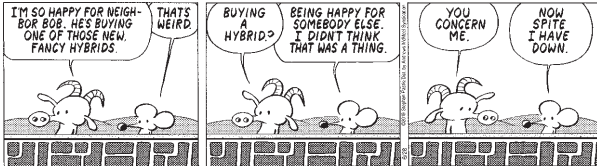
Frazz



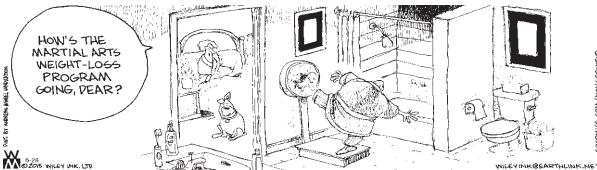
Dilbert



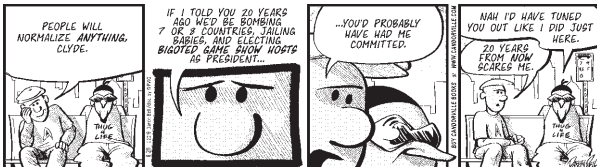
Pearls Before Swine



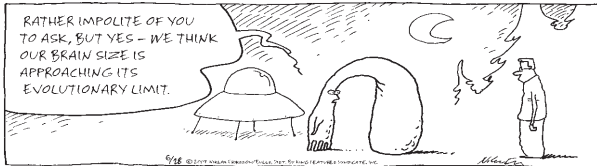
Non Sequitur



Candorville



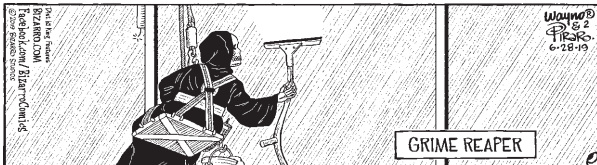
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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12				13				14						
15				16				17						
18				19										
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31	32	33												
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38						39	40				41	42	43	44
					45					46		47		
48	49	50	51									52		
53							54					55		
56							57					58		

ACROSS

- "Kapow!"
- British ref. work
- Holler
- Director Spike
- Chemical suffix
- Fall sign
- Nest egg acronym
- Large, luxurious car
- Brooch
- Range
- Collections
- Nest (raging)
- First lady of scat
- Earth Day mo.
- Transparent
- Dolphins' home
- Traces of smoke
- Agile
- Obtained
- Bygone Peruvian
- Flamenco cheer
- Vacillate
- Quick trip
- Shoe width
- Pungent cheese
- Aachen article
- Sports figures?
- Zsa Zsa's sister
- 55 Speck
- Dunkable treat
- River blocker
- Actor Brynner

DOWN

- Radar dots
- High nest
- Signified
- Fixes a squeak
- Newspaper chief
- Fiend
- Pivot
- That guy's
- Kimono sash
- Samovar
- kwon do
- Ellipse
- Ballroom dance
- Radiates
- Vinyl records
- Back talk
- Billboards
- Picnic dessert
- Jima
- Roman 1051
- "There's no — team!"
- "Better Call Saul" network
- Bellow
- Swiss metropolis
- Sludded in
- the Winter
- Olympics
- Like a neglected garden
- Vowel group
- Streisand
- title role
- Equitable
- Streetcar
- Leary's drug
- Jurist Lance
- Fortify
- A/C meas.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

ZAP	GLEE	NAPE
IMA	LEND	IMAX
PARFAITS	CITE	
MAD	SECEDES	
SWEDEN	LBJ	
LIS	SAW	SOFAS
ASAP	POI	BELT
PENAL	ESQ	LOA
	POP	RUDDER
IMPALAS	IVS	
HUEY	UNDER	PAR
OSSA	LAIT	ANI
PETS	APPS	RAM

6-28

CRYPTOQUIP

M O Z J N N C G H J M C
Z E E N Q M E B R Q E N M C Q P F H G F H J
P Z R L M E B O N J P Z J S N J
I Z Y L P Z J S , M G Y J N P C I N G F
P Z Q C .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN THE MAN TIED A ROPE AROUND A BARROOM SEAT AND PULLED IT BEHIND HIM, IT WAS A TOWED STOOL.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals W

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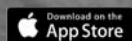
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WNBA			
EASTERN CONFERENCE			
	Pct	GB	
Connecticut	9	3.750	0
Washington	8	4.000	1/2
Chicago	6	5.250	3 1/2
Indiana	7	4.167	4
Dallas	5	5.333	5 1/2
Atlanta	2	7.222	5 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE			
	Pct	GB	
Las Vegas	9	3.583	0
Seattle	6	5.556	1/2
Minnesota	6	5.000	2
Los Angeles	5	5.375	2
Dallas	3	6.333	2 1/2

Tuesdays games			
Minnesota 78, Indiana 74			
Las Vegas 60, Seattle 56			

Wednesdays games			
Washington 81, Chicago 74			
Las Vegas 60, Seattle 56			

Thursdays games			
Las Vegas at Los Angeles			
Dallas at Phoenix			

Fridays games			
Dallas at New York			
Indiana at Phoenix			

Closing at Seattle			
Las Vegas at Seattle			

Soccer			
CONCACAF Gold Cup			
x-Mexico			
x-Chicago			
x-Martinique			
x-Cuba			

Saturday, June 23			
At Pasadena, Calif.			
Mexico, C. Cuba 0-1			

Wednesday, June 19			
At Denver			
Martinique 3, Cuba 0			

Sunday, June 23			
At Charlotte, N.C.			
Mexico 3, Cuba 0			

Canada 7, Cuba 0			
Mexico 3, Martinique 2			

GP W L D GF GA Pts			
x-Haiti			
x-Costa Rica			
Bermuda			
Nicaragua			

Sunday, June 16			
At San Jose, Costa Rica			
Haiti 2, Bermuda 1			

Thursday, June 20			
At Frisco, Texas			
Haiti 2, Nicaragua 0			

Monday, June 21			
At Harrison, N.J.			
Bermuda 2, Nicaragua 0			

GP W L D GF GA Pts			
x-Haiti			
x-Costa Rica			
Bermuda			
Nicaragua			

Sunday, June 16			
At Kingston, Jamaica			
El Salvador 3, Honduras 2			

At Houston			
El Salvador 3, Honduras 2			
Curacao 1, Honduras 0			

Tuesday, June 25			
At Los Angeles			
Jamaica 1, Curacao 1			

GP W L D GF GA Pts			
x-United States			
x-Trinidad			
x-Panamá			
x-Honduras			

Tuesday, June 18			
At St. Paul, Minn.			
Panama 2, Trinidad 1			

Saturday, June 22			
At Houston			
Panama 4, Guyana 2			

Wednesday, June 26			
At Kansas City, Mo.			
Trinidad and Tobago 2, Guyana 1			

Thursday, June 27			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Friday, June 28			
At Philadelphia			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Saturday, June 29			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Sunday, June 30			
At Philadelphia			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Monday, July 1			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Tuesday, July 2			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Wednesday, July 3			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Thursday, July 4			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Friday, July 5			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Saturday, July 6			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Sunday, July 7			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Monday, July 8			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Tuesday, July 9			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Wednesday, July 10			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Thursday, July 11			
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Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Friday, July 12			
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Saturday, July 13			
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Sunday, July 14			
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Monday, July 15			
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Monday, July 29			
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Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Tuesday, July 30			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Wednesday, July 31			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Thursday, August 1			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Friday, August 2			
At Houston			
Panama 1, Honduras 0			

Saturday, August 3			

OLYMPICS/MLB

Japan committee gets new leader in wake of scandal

By STEPHEN WADE
Associated Press

TOKYO — A former gold medalist was elected Thursday to lead the Japanese Olympic Committee, which is mired in a scandal that forced the former president to step aside in an alleged vote-buying scheme to land next year's Tokyo Games.

Yasuhiro Yamashita was chosen to take over for Tsunekazu Takeda, who announced earlier this year he would step down at the end of his term. He also resigned from the International Olympic Committee, where he was the head of the powerful marketing commission.

"We have to enhance our integrity to be able to recover the trust of the Japan sports world," Yamashita said. "This is the most important thing."

Takeda, who led the JOC for almost two decades, has denied the corruption allegations that are being pursued by French investigators.

Yamashita won gold in judo at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics and is one of Japan's most famous athletes. He is likely to be elevated to an IOC membership with the Tokyo Olympics opening in 13 months. He is also president of the All Japan Judo Federation.

The announcement came at the JOC's new headquarters, a \$150 million facility built across from Tokyo's under-construction National Stadium.

Yamashita takes over as French authorities are set to try Lamine Diack and one of his sons — Papa Massata Diack — on corruption connected with the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics and the 2020 Tokyo Games. The elder Diack was a powerful IOC member and

is alleged to have received payments to sway IOC votes.

"We have seen some scandals in sports, including the JOC. And therefore the trust and confidence is now in question," Yamashita said. "We have to grapple with these issues very seriously."

The scandal is a black eye for next year's Olympics, although they still seem to have widespread public support. Ticket demand in Japan is unprecedented, and Tokyo organizers have raised more than \$3 billion in local sponsorship revenue — about three times as much as any previous games.

Takeda was highly visible just a few months ago when he stood alongside IOC President Thomas Bach, exchanging small talk in Tokyo as Bach called the Japanese Olympics the "best prepared" in history.

Takeda has acknowledged he signed off on about \$2 million in payments to a Singapore consulting company, which is believed to have been a conduit to the Diacks. Takeka, who has been largely portrayed as the fall guy, said he was not part of the decision-making process and had no reason to consider signing a "regular commercial contract."

"As far as Mr. Takeda involving the French authorities, I believe he is innocent," said Yamashita, adding the JOC investigated the issue and did not see a need for further examination. "I believe in his innocence and I am confident that is how it will be decided."

Takeda is a distant member of Japan's royal family, the great-grandson of the Meiji emperor who ruled late in the 19th century and into the 20th. He competed in equestrian events in the 1972 and 1976 Olympics.



KENZABURO FUKUHARA, KYODO NEWS/AP

Former gold medalist Yasuhiro Yamashita speaks during a news conference in Tokyo, on Thursday. Yamashita has been elected to lead the Japanese Olympic Committee, which is mired in a scandal that forced the former president to step aside in an alleged vote-buying scheme to land next year's Tokyo Games.



CHRIS CARLSON/AP

The Angels' Shohei Ohtani, right, throws as pitching coach Doug White looks on in the bullpen on Wednesday. It was the first time he threw off a mound since Tommy John surgery Oct 1, 2018.

Ohtani throws off mound for first time since surgery

By GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Shohei Ohtani threw off a mound Wednesday for the first time since undergoing Tommy John surgery, taking another significant step in his return to pitching for the Los Angeles Angels next season.

About four hours after Ohtani threw 40 pitches off a mound and made 70 additional throws on flat ground at Angel Stadium, he was in Los Angeles' lineup as the designated hitter against Cincinnati.

"I felt really comfortable," Ohtani said through a translator. "It felt good to get up on there again."

Ohtani will not pitch for the Angels until 2020, manager Brad Ausmus confirmed once again.

"No chance," Ausmus said with a smile.

But the team and its two-way star believe everything is progressing perfectly toward Ohtani's plan to resume his two-way career next season.

Ohtani had elbow ligament replacement surgery Oct. 1, and his rehabilitation has gone remarkably smoothly, even while he continues racking up impressive numbers as the Angels' designated hitter.

"Mentally, I think I have a little bit better because I've been playing every day as a hitter,"

Ohtani said. "I think that helps me get through it a little better than other people that can't play."

The AL Rookie of the Year returned to the Angels' lineup May 7, and he has been an everyday contributor at the plate while building his arm strength before games.

Ohtani is batting .277 with nine homers, 31 RBIs and a .829 OPS in 42 games this season. He became the first Japanese-born player to hit for the cycle in the majors on June 13 at Tampa Bay.

Ohtani said he tried to throw off the mound at about 50% of his full strength, in accordance with his rehab plan. Most of his throws from the mound were with the catcher standing up, but he still went through his pitching motion fairly effectively.

"He looked great," Angels pitching coach Doug White said. "It's very low intensity ... but he always knows what he wants to do. He always knows how he wants it to feel, and the process in which he's going to get it done. It's nice to see."

Ohtani is expected to go through the same throwing workout Saturday, White said.

Ohtani went 4-2 with a 3.31 ERA and 63 strikeouts in 10 starts as a rookie for the Angels, but pitched just once after June 6. He also hit 22 homers and drove in 61 runs with a .925 OPS.

Montreal group supports sharing Rays

By SEAN FARRELL
Associated Press

MONTREAL — The son of former Montreal Expos owner Charles Bronfman believes the predominantly French-speaking city is ready and willing to support — and share — the Tampa Bay Rays.

Private equity investor Stephen Bronfman leads a group working on bringing baseball back to Montreal and said Wednesday the city can embrace the sport again. He called the idea of one team in two cities groundbreaking.

Commissioner Rob Manfred said last week the Rays have

"broad permission to explore what's available." Tampa Bay is averaging 14,546 fans a game, lowest in the American League and well below the MLB average of 27,360. Only the Miami Marlins draw smaller crowds, averaging 9,378.

On Tuesday, Rays principal owner Stu Sternberg said it's unrealistic for his team to play full time in the Tampa Bay area, and said a shared season with Montreal is the best option.

Montreal has been without a big-league team since the Expos left after the 2004 season for Washington and became the Nationals. "We have always said we have

a two-track approach," Bronfman said. "There has always been the possibility of a team being relocated, and then there is expansion. We don't know if expansion is in the cards in the decade to come, if at all. We have this possibility now to begin the work of having Major League Baseball here with an existing team that is really professional. It's not like starting from scratch. This is a team that is playing nearly .600 baseball."

An agreement between the Rays and St. Petersburg for Tropicana Field runs through 2027. St. Petersburg mayor Rick Kriseman has said the city will not fund a new stadium for a part-time team.

MLB

Scoreboard

American League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	52	28	.650	—
Tampa Bay	45	35	.563	7
Boston	44	38	.537	9
Toronto	29	52	.358	23½
Baltimore	22	58	.275	30
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	52	27	.658	—
Cleveland	42	36	.550	8½
Chicago	37	41	.474	14½
Detroit	26	49	.347	24
Kansas City	28	53	.346	25
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	50	31	.617	—
Texas	44	36	.550	5½
Oakland	43	38	.531	7
Los Angeles	41	40	.506	9
Seattle	37	47	.440	14½

National League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	48	33	.593	—
Philadelphia	42	38	.525	5½
Washington	39	40	.494	8
New York	37	44	.457	11
Miami	30	48	.385	16½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	43	37	.538	—
Milwaukee	42	38	.525	1
St. Louis	40	39	.506	2½
Pittsburgh	37	41	.474	5
Cincinnati	36	42	.462	6
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	55	27	.671	—
Colorado	42	38	.525	12
Arizona	41	41	.500	14
San Diego	40	40	.500	14
San Francisco	34	45	.430	19½

Wednesday's games

Chicago White Sox 8, Boston 7
N.Y. Yankees 8, Toronto 7
Cleveland 5, Kansas City 3
San Diego 10, Baltimore 5
Texas 4, Detroit 1
Oakland 2, St. Louis 0
L.A. Angels 5, Cincinnati 1
Pittsburgh 14, Houston 2
Minnesota 6, Tampa Bay 4
Seattle 4, Milwaukee 2
Arizona 8, L.A. Dodgers 2
Colorado 6, San Francisco 3
Philadelphia 5, N.Y. Mets 4, 10 innings
Washington 7, Miami 5
Atlanta 5, Chicago Cubs 3

Thursday's games

Tampa Bay at Minnesota
Texas at Detroit
Pittsburgh at Houston
Seattle at Milwaukee
Oakland at L.A. Angels
N.Y. Mets at Philadelphia
Atlanta at Chicago Cubs
Washington at Miami
L.A. Dodgers at Colorado
Arizona at San Francisco

Friday's games

Cleveland (Clevener 1-1) at Baltimore (Means 6-4)
Kansas City (Duffy 3-3) at Toronto (TBD)
Texas (Lynn 9-4) at Tampa Bay (Chirinos 7-3)
Washington (Sanchez 3-6) at Detroit (Norris 2-6)
Minnesota (Berrios 8-3) at Chicago White Sox (TBD)
Seattle (TBD) at Houston (Miley 6-4)
Oakland (Piers 7-3) at L.A. Angels (Pena 5-2)
Atlanta (Soroka 8-1) at N.Y. Mets (deGrom 4-6)
Chicago Cubs (Hamelis 6-2) at Cincinnati (May 5-5)
Philadelphia (Velasquez 2-4) at Miami (Hernandez 0-2)
Pittsburgh (Archer 3-6) at Milwaukee (Chacin 3-8)
St. Louis (Wacha 5-3) at Colorado (Senzate 6-5)
Arizona (Kelly 7-7) at San Francisco (Anderson 2-3)

Saturday's games

N.Y. Yankees vs. Boston at London
Cleveland at Baltimore
Kansas City at Toronto
Chicago Cubs at Cincinnati
Philadelphia at Miami
Texas at Tampa Bay
Washington at Detroit
Atlanta at N.Y. Mets
Minnesota at Chicago White Sox
Seattle at Houston
L.A. Dodgers at Colorado
Pittsburgh at Milwaukee
Arizona at San Francisco
Oakland at L.A. Angels
St. Louis at San Diego

Sunday's games

N.Y. Yankees vs. Boston at London
Cleveland at Baltimore
Kansas City at Toronto
Chicago Cubs at Cincinnati
Philadelphia at Miami
Texas at Tampa Bay
Washington at Detroit
Seattle at Houston
L.A. Dodgers at Colorado
Pittsburgh at Milwaukee
Arizona at San Francisco
Oakland at L.A. Angels
St. Louis at San Diego

Calendar

June 29-30 — New York Yankees vs. Boston at London.
July 2 — International amateur signing period opens.
July 9 — All-Star Game at Cleveland.



PHOTOS BY FRANK AUGSTEIN/AP

Major League Baseball is hoping to make its mark during its European debut this weekend at London Stadium.

America's pastime in London

Yankees top Blue Jays, prepare to go overseas to play Red Sox

By BEN WALKER
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Buckingham Palace and Westminster Abbey, the pubs and the double-decker buses, there's plenty to see in London.

To Aaron Judge, there's an even more enticing sight: The 385-foot fence in center field at the soccer stadium where his New York Yankees will play this weekend.

"I don't mind that at all," he said, smiling.

Europe, you're up.

The Yankees hit two more big flies before jetting off to visit Big Ben and the British capital, beating the Toronto Blue Jays 8-7 Wednesday.

Didi Gregorius and DJ LeMahieu connected as the Yankees extended their major league record to 29 straight games with a home run. Gleyber Torres won it with an RBI single in the ninth inning.

The AL East leaders overcame two homers and a double by Lourdes Gurriel Jr., plus an early

5-0 deficit, to finish a power-packed 9-1 homestand.

Now, they'll head straight from Yankee Stadium to England, where they'll enjoy two days off before playing the Boston Red Sox on Saturday and Sunday at London Stadium in the first major league games in Europe.

"It's different, for sure. It's unique, obviously," LeMahieu said. "To some of the guys it feels like we're going on a field trip."

Manager Aaron Boone was among several Yankees set for "the flight across the pond" to explore London for the first time. He said his family is already overseas and had sent him pictures of a red phone booth, a popular bridge and Heathrow Airport. "I got some work to do to figure out some touristy things to do," Judge said.

This was New York's final home game until after the All-Star break, on July 12 against the Blue Jays. During a break before the bottom of the eighth, the stadium sound system blared "London Calling" by The Clash.



Chef Cristobal Vazquez presents the traditional "baseball foods" that will be available during this weekend's series between the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox in London.

Zack Britton — pronounced "Britain," in fact — wasn't so great in giving up Cavan Biggio's RBI single in the ninth that made it 7-all. But Britton (3-1) wound up with the win to close out a three-game sweep.

Gregorius got an infield hit off Nick Kingham (3-2) with one out in the ninth, Aaron Hicks walked and Torres followed with his hit.

LeMahieu stretched his streak to 10 games of getting a hit and scoring a run, the team's longest such string since Johnny Damon's 10-gamer in 2009.

Gurriel hit a three-run homer in the first and a solo drive in the fifth for a 6-5 lead. Danny Jansen also connected for the Blue Jays.

Gregorius homered off Trent Thornton and Judge had three hits.

"Every single one of those guys can run the ball out of the yard, especially at a park like this," Thornton said. "So that's when it comes down to really executing your pitches and slowing the game down and getting ahead in the count and making them hit your pitches."

NHL

Karlsson among players who decided to stay put

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

Erik Karlsson wanted some time and space. When the San Jose Sharks acquired the Norris Trophy-winning defenseman in a trade last September, he and his wife told them up front they wouldn't sign a long-term contract until they played a season to see if it was a fit. They gave general manager Doug Wilson their word they would make a decision in enough time to let the Sharks plan their offseason.

Karlsson signed two weeks before free agency opened.

"They were letting me play hockey and getting adjusted to everything, and that meant the world to me," Karlsson said after signing for \$92 million over eight years. "I'm very happy with how everything happened and that they didn't force me into making a decision earlier than this."

Karlsson is one of several players who might have landed richer contracts via free agency and opted instead to re-sign with their teams. For Karlsson, Philadelphia's Kevin Hayes, Vancouver's Alex Edler, Buffalo's Jeff Skinner, Washington's Carl Hagelin and Tampa Bay's Braydon Coburn, staying put won out over the risk of the open market.

"You never know what's going to be out there if you go to free agency," Edler said. "There's a lot of factors coming up here in the next few years with the potential lockout (and) there's an expansion draft (for Seattle)."

A lower-than-expected salary cap set at \$81.5 million also means there will be less money available all around on July 1.

Of course, it's not like most of these deals were hometown discounts. Karlsson got the richest salary for a defenseman in NHL history, Hayes signed for \$50 million and Skinner turned a career year into \$72 million. No matter the cap, the possibility existed that free agent frenzy could land them bigger deals.

They just didn't want to find out.

"Going to July 1 is nice, (but) it's kind of nice to be able to get it over with and sign with a tremendous team," Hayes said. "On July 1 and unrestricted free agency is definitely an intriguing idea. But when I sat down with my agent and we kind of thought about



JEFFREY T. BARNES/AP

Jeff Skinner of the Buffalo Sabres is one of several players who could have cashed out even richer contracts by going to free agency and opted instead to re-sign with their current teams.

what type of team I'd want to go to and where I'd fit into the organization and the team, the Flyers were at the top of the list."

The Flyers acquired the rights to Hayes from Winnipeg in early June and had to sell him on the benefits of playing in Philly. Elsewhere, familiarity helped. Just as Karlsson and wife Melinda got to know the Bay Area and Sharks organization over nine months, Skinner's 40-goal season in Buffalo convinced him to stay.

"Going through the process, you think about everything, you weigh the pros and cons," Skinner said. "We just didn't feel the need to get to that point because I like it here and I didn't feel like it needed to get to that point where I wanted to look elsewhere."

Coburn, who took a pay cut to sign a \$3.4 million, two-year contract, said Tampa feeling like home off the ice and "unfinished business" on the ice made staying his family's top choice. After finishing 21 points ahead of the rest of the league and getting swept in the first round of the playoffs, the Lightning are the early favorites to win the Stanley Cup next season.

"We have an unbelievable team

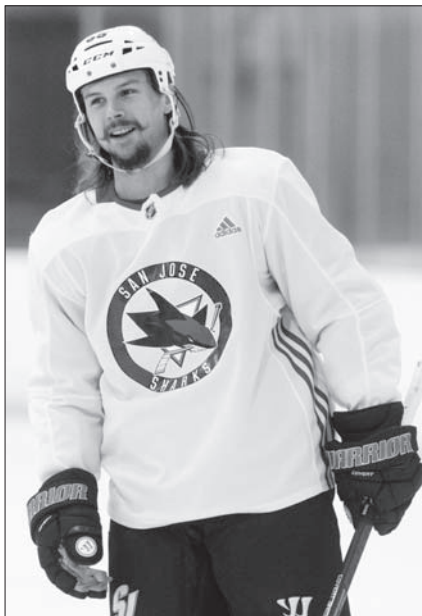
here and I want to be a part of it," Coburn said.

Hagelin feels the same way about the Capitals after playing only 27 regular-season and playoff games with them since late February. The 30-year-old feared Washington's salary-cap squeeze might impede him from sticking around but was willing to take a lower salary than he could've gotten on the open market to get an \$11 million, four-year deal with a team he believes can win a championship in that time like it did in 2018.

"I wouldn't have signed with Washington if I didn't believe there's still a good chance to win the Stanley Cup," Hagelin said.

Edler last played a playoff game in 2014 and the Canucks are in the midst of a rebuild. Combine that with him being 33 and it might have been easy to understand Edler wanting to test the market. Instead, he had no wanderlust and agreed to a \$12 million, two-year deal after 13 seasons with the Canucks.

"I've said from the beginning that if a deal was available with Vancouver, that was my No. 1 priority," Edler said.



ADRIAN WYLD, ABOVE, THE CANADIAN PRESS AND MATT SLOCUM, BELOW/AP

Above: Erik Karlsson signed an eight-year, \$92 million contract to return to San Jose two weeks before the free agency period began. Below: Alex Edler signed a two-year extension with Vancouver.



"We just didn't feel the need to get to that point because I like it here and I didn't feel like it needed to get to that point where I wanted to look elsewhere."

JEFF SKINNER

Sabres forward, who's coming off a 40-goal season in Buffalo

NHL

Veterans Perry, Pavelski available

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

The goodbye came quickly if respectfully for Anaheim Ducks veteran Corey Perry.

After a knee injury limited the 34-year-old forward to 31 games, general manager Bob Murray last week bought out the final two years of Perry's contract and sent the franchise cornerstone unexpectedly into free agency.

"This is one of the most difficult decisions I've had to make in my 44 years in the NHL," Murray said. "Corey gave everything to this franchise for 14 years, never giving an inch to his competitors."

Now, one of those competitors will get to see what Perry has left. Big money will flow to forward Artemi Panarin, center Matt Duchene and goaltender Sergei Bobrovsky on July 1 as the top three free agents available, though Perry and other seasoned veterans are worth watching when the market opens.

Joining Perry as a one-organization player potentially changing teams is San Jose captain Joe Pavelski, who had 38 goals and 64 points in 75 games last season. The Sharks are in a salary-cap squeeze and also might have to say goodbye to forward Joonas Donskoi, but general manager Doug Wilson wasn't giving up on bringing Pavelski back after signing defenseman Erik Karlsson to a \$92 million contract.

"I don't think anybody should rush to conclusions on anything," Wilson said. "There's many ways to accomplish different things. My history over the years, you explore everything."

Pavelski, 34, is drawing interest around the NHL and could follow the lead of former Sharks forward Patrick Marleau, who opted two years ago to depart in free agency and signed in Toronto. The cap will almost certainly keep the Maple Leafs from retaining Jake Gardiner after the defenseman spent his entire eight-year career with them.

Perry had been a fixture in Anaheim during the entire salary cap era that began in 2005. The 2011 Hart Trophy winner has spoken to several teams since the interview period opened Sunday.

Other free agents to watch:

Anders Lee

Could the New York Islanders lose their captain in back-to-back off-seasons? It's possible Lee follows John Tavares out the door following another 50-point year. One difference this time: The Islanders are coming off a trip to the second round of the playoffs, clearly have something cooking with coach Barry Trotz and are heading in the right direction. Forwards Brock Nelson and Jordan Eberle already re-signed, but keep an eye on Vezina Trophy finalist goaltender Robin Lehner's decision.

Bob and Bread

Panarin signed up with Bobrovsky's agent during the season, and there is reason to believe they are a package deal. The Florida Panthers hosted the Columbus forward and goalie this week and are seen as the favorites to sign them, especially after Roberto Luongo retired.

Brett Connolly

The sixth overall pick in 2010 struggled to find his place in the NHL until three years with Washington allowed him to establish himself. Connolly scored six goals in the Capitals' 2018 Stanley Cup run and followed that up by setting career highs with 22 goals, 24 assists and 46 points.

"I think we brought stability to his game," Capitals GM Brian MacLellan said. "He just found stability, found a place where he could play. There wasn't a lot of pressure on him to score because he had guys in front of him. I think it was just a good fit team-wise and for him, and he took advantage of it."

Washington's salary-cap crunch is likely to send Connolly into the market, where he could get a big payday and a bigger role with another team.

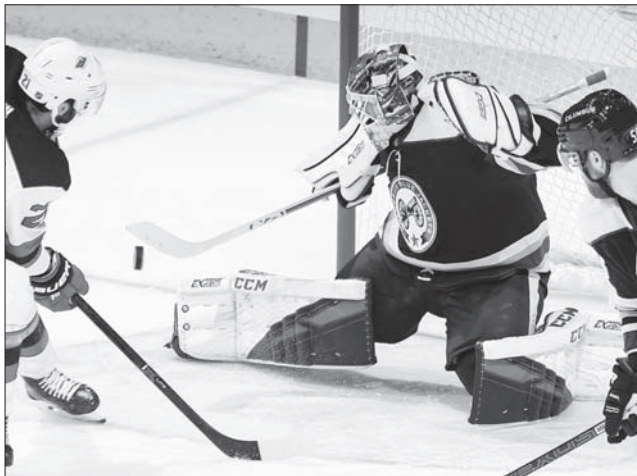
Young'ins

A handful of intriguing players under age 27 were not tendered qualifying offers as restricted free agents and are now free to sign with any team. That list includes 24-year-old forward Ryan Hartman, who has been traded three times in 18 months, 25-year-old defenseman Derrick Pouliot and under-achieving 2013 first-round picks Kirby Reichel and Curtis Lazar.



JAC C. HONG/AP

Former NHL MVP Corey Perry, 34, was released by the Anaheim Ducks after 14 seasons with the franchise, making him a free agent.



TYLER SCHANK, COLUMBUS DISPATCH/TNS

Columbus Blue Jackets goaltender Sergei Bobrovsky is a two-time Vezina Trophy winner who is set to become a free agent on July 1. Bobrovsky is one of several Columbus players who could leave.

All eyes on Columbus

Blue Jackets stand to lose Bobrovsky, Panarin

By JOHN WAWROW
Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia **W**here many express concern, Jarmo Kekalainen says he sees only opportunity regarding the uncertain state of the Columbus roster a few days before NHL free agency.

To Kekalainen, the fear of possibly losing stars such as Matt Duchene, Artemi Panarin and goalie Sergei Bobrovsky on July 1 is offset by the knowledge that their departures would open significant space under the salary cap.

That would put the Blue Jackets general manager in prime position to fill those holes through trades or free agency at a time when the newly announced \$81.5 million payroll maximum for next season is forcing various cap-strapped teams to shed salary.

"I think every \$100,000 or every \$1,000 counts at this point for some teams that are going to be squeezed," Kekalainen said shortly after the new cap number — \$1.5 million lower than initially projected — was announced. "They're going to have to sell their problems. We could be a solution."

Kekalainen won't rate the Blue Jackets' chances of re-signing one or all three players.

"I'm sure we'll get some answers shortly if it starts looking like they're moving into another direction. But we thought this could happen," he said, refer-



JULIO CORTEZ/AP

Blue Jackets left wing Artemi Panarin, 27, is regarded as the top free agent available.

ring to the bold gamble Columbus made in choosing to acquire Duchene in a trade with Ottawa, and retain Panarin and Bobrovsky at the trade deadline in February knowing they were in the final years of their contracts.

"If it happens, we're not going to be shocked," Kekalainen added. "If it is the case, then we just move forward with what we have and start building other ways."

The 27-year-old Panarin is considered the top free agent on the market. The NHL's 2016 rookie

of the year has topped 70 points in each of his four seasons and scored 116 goals in 322 career games. Duchene, a center, has topped 20 goals seven times in 10 seasons and is coming off a year in which he had a career-best 31 goals.

And then there is the 30-year-old Bobrovsky, a two-time Vezina Trophy winner. The Blue Jackets could also lose center Ryan Dzingir, whom they acquired in a separate trade with Ottawa.

Other notable free agents set to hit the market are San Jose captain Joe Pavelski, Winnipeg defenseman Tyler Myers and Toronto defenseman Jake Gardiner.

The list of top-end talent has dwindled with defenseman Erik Karlsson re-signing with San Jose, forward Jeff Skinner re-signing with Buffalo, and Philadelphia acquiring and signing center Kevin Hayes.

According to Sportrac.com, only nine of 31 teams are projected to be \$20 million or more under the cap, led by Colorado at \$35.5 million. At the other end of the spectrum is Vegas, currently projected to be \$1.6 million over the cap, which will have to be in compliance by the start of the season in October.

Some teams may resort to the rarely used option of poaching from the restricted free agent pool. This would require a team issuing an offer sheet, which would lead to the player's team having to decide to match the offer or receive draft picks as compensation.

NBA/SERVICE ACADEMIES

On basketball

For Leonard, Durant best move is to stay put

Contract math simple for Raptors', Warriors' stars

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

Toronto's Kawhi Leonard and Golden State's Kevin Durant are both very difficult to figure out. They seem to enjoy giving cryptic answers, a minimum of clues, and clearly relish having enigmatic status.

It makes free agency tough to forecast.

Luckily for Toronto and Golden State, the math should be very simple.

Leonard and Durant are the biggest dominoes that will fall sometime after the free-agent window opens Sunday evening — unless, of course, neither ends up falling elsewhere and decide to stay put for now. And that is what the math says both of them would be wisest to do.

Durant will be offered a \$221 million, five-year contract from Golden State. That's one year and \$57 million more than any other team can offer. Provided that he won't be playing next year anyway because of his ruptured Achilles and that there's no guarantee that the after-surgery version of Durant will remain in the best-player-on-the-planet conversation, it would be less than prudent to leave that much money on the table.

"He's been everything to us," Warriors general manager Bob Myers said earlier this month.

With Leonard, it's all a bit more complex.



FRANK GUNN, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

Cheering fans are reflected in the sunglasses of the Raptors' Kawhi Leonard during the team's NBA basketball championship parade in Toronto earlier this month. Leonard, the 2019 Finals MVP, is a free agent after leading the Raptors to a title in his lone season with the franchise.

The NBA champion Raptors could offer him anything from \$32 million for one year to \$190 million for five years, and the reality is that Leonard probably wants something in between. In the summer of 2021, after Leonard completes his 10th year in the league, he goes from being able to command 30% of a salary cap to

35% of a salary cap.

That 5% is going to be a lot of money. That's why, for Leonard, the smarter play in terms of finances is to sign a shorter deal this summer — two years, \$68 million or so, maybe with a third year at his option — and cash in for all he will have coming two years from now.

"He's a confident human being," Raptors President Masai Ujiri said. "He's an unbelievable person. He is his own person. ... I think we've built a trust there."

Of course, all that is the money aspect of things.

Leonard has already pocketed about \$85 million in on-court earnings and the big money is

'He's a confident human being. He is his own person. ... I think we've built a trust there.'

Masai Ujiri

Toronto Raptors President, on 2019 NBA Finals MVP Kawhi Leonard

really going to start rolling in now. Durant is up to around \$190 million on the court, with probably just as much off the court. They're both set for life, so money won't be the sole driving force in their respective decisions.

The basketball stuff still matters. No matter how much Durant and Leonard have in the bank, they cannot buy championship rings.

This is where the ambiguity starts to kick in, although there shouldn't be much. Even with the Los Angeles Lakers about to get Anthony Davis in a trade, even with the Brooklyn Nets quite possibly about to land Kyrie Irving in free agency, it's fairly clear that the Raptors and Warriors — this past season's NBA finalists — will go into next season with the most realistic championship aspirations.

For Durant and Leonard, all the talk about New York and Brooklyn and Los Angeles should be just that — talk.

The simplest, and right, move for both is this: Run it back. Stay put. Be the dominoes that don't fall, and let the rest of the league react to that.



OLIVER DOULIERY/TNS

After rescinding a similar policy in 2017, President Donald Trump, seen presenting the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy to Army's football team on May 6, followed through on comments he made during the ceremony, signing a presidential memorandum ordering the Pentagon to develop a new policy that will allow military academy athletes to go professional immediately after graduating.

Trump to Pentagon: Allow military academy athletes to go pro after graduation

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has signed a presidential memorandum ordering the Pentagon to develop a new policy to allow athletes attending the nation's military academies to play professional sports immediately after graduating.

The memo says student athletes graduating from the academies and Reserve Officers' Training Corps should be able to defer their military service obligations due to the "short window of time" they have to "take advantage of their athletic talents during which playing professional sports is realistically possible." It gives the defense secretary 120 days to develop a plan.

Trump had said in May that he was considering the change while presenting the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy to Army's football team.

Trump's own Defense Department in 2017 rescinded a policy that allowed the

best athletes from the military's service academies to go straight to the pros upon graduation instead of having to first serve on active duty. That meant they had to serve two years of active duty before applying for reserve status to pursue a career in professional sports.

Then-Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, in an April 2017 memo, said that the service academies "exist to develop future officers," and that graduates would serve as "full-fledged military officers carrying out the normal work and career expectations" of someone who received an education at the taxpayers' expense.

Several Navy football players have gone on to have success in the NFL, most notably 1963 Heisman Trophy winner Roger Staubach, a quarterback for the Midshipmen from 1962-64. After serving a tour of duty in Vietnam, he joined the Dallas Cowboys in 1969 and guided the team to a pair of Super Bowl victories.

COLLEGE WORLD SERIES/SOCCER



PHOTOS BY JOHN PETERSON/AP

Vanderbilt players celebrate after defeating Michigan 8-2 Wednesday in the final game of the College World Series in Omaha, Neb.

Vanderbilt pounds Michigan for its second national title

By ERIC OLSON

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Vanderbilt swept the Southeastern Conference regular-season and tournament titles, set the league record for wins, tied the record with 13 draft picks and lost back-to-back games just twice.

Now the Commodores are national champions.

Mason Hickman and Jake Eder combined for 14 strikeouts, Michigan ace Karl Kauffmann was knocked out in the fourth inning, and the Commodores won the College World Series with an 8-2 victory in Game 3 of the finals Wednesday night.

Vandy (59-12) won its second title in its four CWS appearances, all since 2011. The other one came in 2014.

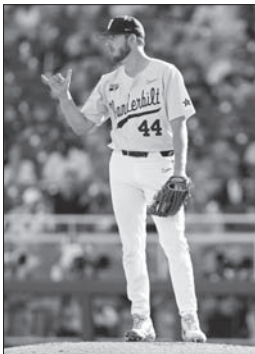
"I felt we were going to hit well, I felt we were going to play well. I thought this was going to be a nice night for the kids," coach Tim Corbin said.

Freshman Kumar Rocker, who was dominant in two CWS starts, was selected the Most Outstanding Player.

Hickman struck out 10 in six innings and limited the Wolverines (50-22) to one hit after he gave up three in a row to start the game. Kauffmann, making his third start in the CWS, struggled with his control, and Vandy broke open the game with three runs in the third inning and two in the fourth.

When Ako Thomas flew out to center to end the game, the Vandy dugout and bullpen emptied and catcher Philip Clarke sprinted to the mound to embrace Eder.

During the postgame celebration, Vandy players invited Teddy and Susan Everett to join them on the stage set up behind home plate. Their son, Donny Everett, was a star freshman pitcher on the 2016 team and drowned before the start of that year's NCAA Tournament. The seniors on this year's team were his teammates.



Vanderbilt pitcher Mason Hickman threw 10 strikeouts in six innings.

"Those two mean so much to this program and all the players and the seniors," shortstop Ethan Paul said. "To this day, every time I look at Teddy I think of Donny, and just being able to share that moment with them was something we all really wanted to do."

The loss ended a surprising postseason for Michigan, which went from being one of the last four teams picked for the 64-team NCAA Tournament to becoming the first Big Ten team to play in the finals since Ohio State in 1966. It was Michigan's first CWS since 1984.

"They have inspired future generations of Michigan baseball players with the belief that winning a national championship is possible," coach Erik Bakich said. "The

only way you can have an Omaha program is to have an Omaha team. This is very much a tipping point for us."

Michigan staged off elimination in the first two rounds of the national tournament after squandering leads. The Wolverines knocked off No. 1 national seed UCLA to reach the CWS.

"We were hoping it would end in a better way," first baseman Jimmy Kerr said. "We'll look back — maybe not in a week or in a month — but down the road it will be fond memories."

Bakich was an assistant to Corbin from 2003-09 at Vanderbilt, and the two remain close friends.

"He's put together a remarkable year with those guys," Corbin said. "Where they came from ... they gave us everything we wanted and more."

Vandy is the sixth national champion from the SEC since 2009 and 12th overall, second only to the 18 won by the Pac-12 and its previous iterations. At No. 2, Vandy became the highest national seed to win it all since Miami in 2001.

Hickman gave up three straight singles to start the game, leading to Michigan's first run. He retired nine of the next 10, striking out six, and got out of trouble when the Wolverines loaded the bases in the fourth. He retired the last six he faced before turning the game over to Eder.

Hickman fanned nine or more in five of his final six starts and allowed one or fewer runs in nine of his last 13.

Though the Commodores brought to Omaha an offense ranked in the top five nationally in the major categories, it was pitching that carried them for most of their stay.

Vandy had eight runs on nine hits Wednesday, but its .221 average in six CWS games was the lowest for a national champion in the aluminum bat era that started in 1974.

Altidore return helps US men defeat Panama

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — Jozy Altidore made an impression in his first return to the United States' starting lineup.

Altidore scored on an overhead kick in his first start for the national team in 20 months, lifting the U.S. over Panama 1-0 Wednesday night as the Americans finished first in their CONCACAF Gold Cup group.

Altidore got the goal from 2 yards following a corner kick in the 66th minute that was redirected by Matt Miazga. Coming back from a hamstring injury that slowed him at the start of training camp, the 29-year-old Altidore scored his 42nd goal in 113 international appearances.

After the match, he walked by reporters and did not stop to respond to questions.

The defending champion United States went 3-0 in group play and outscored opponents 11-0. The 30th-ranked Americans play No. 79 Curacao in the quarterfinals at Philadelphia on Sunday, and the winner faces Jamaica or Panama in the semifinals.

"This is a team we can't take lightly," U.S. coach Gregg Berhalter said. "We're going to go in fully prepared. They have talent. They can score goals."

The plus-11 goal difference was the best in the Gold Cup for the Americans, topping plus-nine in 2013. The Americans did not allow a goal in a three-match group stage for the second time, the first since 2007, and improved to 36 wins, one loss and four draws in the Gold Cup group stage.

"I talked to Jozy at halftime and asked how much more he had in him," Berhalter explained. "He said, 'I want to stay on the field.' When you hear that from a player, it makes you feel great. When that player goes out and scores the winning goal, it makes you feel even better."

Both teams already had clinched quarterfinal berths. Berhalter changed all 11 starters and Panama nine. Altidore had not started since the loss at Trinidad and Tobago on Oct. 10, 2017, that ended the Americans' streak of seven straight World Cup appearances.



COLIN E. BRALEY / AP

U.S. defender Daniel Lovitz, left, and Panama defender Francisco Palacios go for a header Wednesday. The U.S. squad finished first in its CONCACAF Gold Cup group with a 1-0 win in Kansas City, Kan.

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

On review, VAR has created confusion

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

PARIS — Video review has created confusion and brought questions at the Women's World Cup.

The Video Assistant Referee, or VAR, was integrated into the men's World Cup in Russia last year, leading to calls for it to also be used for the women's tournament in France. But it certainly hasn't gone as smoothly as it did for the men.

VAR has already led to a change in the rules for the knockout stage of the tournament. Some have suggested there has been an over-reliance on the technology, and there have been complaints that it is causing delays and interrupting the flow of the game.

FIFA officials insisted Wednesday that the system is working as intended.

"The VAR cannot be blind, cannot ignore. If you have a tool that offers you the possibility to check, you have to check," said Pierluigi Collina, chairman of FIFA's refereeing committee.

Through 44 matches at the Women's World Cup, there were 441 incidents checked through the course of play and 29 VAR reviews, FIFA said. That's one review per 1.52 matches. Of those reviews, 25 resulted in decisions being changed. Four were confirmed.

There have been a record 23 penalty kicks heading into the quarterfinals, surpassing the 22 taken across the entire 2011 World Cup in Canada. Eleven were awarded with VAR assistance. Three were canceled after VAR review.

Collina maintains that VAR helps referees by making sure calls are correct in the high-pressure setting of the World Cup while also protecting teams from bad calls that might impact advancement in the tournament.

Karl Seitz, FIFA's senior manager of refereeing, insisted VAR is not changing the way games are being officiated.

"We instruct the referees to referee as they would referee (without VAR), and that is really a critical point. They are out there officiating like they would officiate with or without VAR. That hasn't changed. Refereeing



Referee Katalin Kulcsar, left, directs players during the Women's World Cup round-of-16 match Monday between Spain and United States at Stade Auguste-Delaune in Reims, France. The introduction of the Video Assistant Referee has had a profound impact on this year's event.

"I think most of the problems came after Argentina versus Scotland because of how the match went — 3-0 to 3-3. A few days before, the same penalty kick was retaken in Jamaica versus Italy and nobody complained. We have to enforce the rules."

Pierluigi Collina
chairman of FIFA's refereeing committee

remains the same, but with the parachute, with the opportunity to correct those big mistakes, or those things the video evidence shows us," Seitz said.

Last week, the use of VAR prompted a rules change going into the round of 16.

The rule was meant to give goalkeepers more flexibility, making them keep just one foot, not two, on the goal line during penalty kicks. But the use of VAR strictly enforced the rule, with goalkeepers given little time to adjust.

FIFA feared more goalkeepers could be penalized and sent off, a concern because no substitutes are allowed during shootouts.

So FIFA received approval from the game's lawmaking body last week to suspend the requirement that goalkeepers be shown yellow cards for stepping off the goal line during penalty shootouts, which means goalkeepers can only be booked at the tournament for stepping off the line during a penalty kick in normal time. The kick will still be retaken,

however. The law could be revisited at future meetings of the International Football Association Board, which includes four FIFA delegates and a representative from each of the four British associations.

"I mean they're calling it very tight and I guess we didn't really know coming into the tournament how tight they were really going to call it," U.S. goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher said at the end of the group stage. "I think the last few games has obviously shown what they can and will call. So I think it's just something to keep in the back of my mind, trying not to dwell on it or think about it too much and have it affect what I'm doing and how I'm playing. But it's obviously something you have to be aware of."

The rule became an issue in the group stage when Scotland goalkeeper Lee Alexander saved a penalty kick by Argentina's Florencia Bonsegundo in stoppage time. A VAR review showed Alexander had moved just inches

By the numbers

25

The number of referee calls that were overturned of the 29 plays that were reviewed by the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) at the Women's World Cup, through 44 matches.

23

The record number of penalty kicks awarded at the Women's World Cup, including 11 with VAR assistance, and the event is just entering the quarterfinals.

SOURCE: Associated Press

off her line and Bonsegundo scored on the retake, tying the game at 3-3 and scuttling Scotland's hopes of going through to the knockout stage.

"I think most of the problems came after Argentina versus Scotland because of how the match went — 3-0 to 3-3. A few days before the same penalty kick was retaken in Jamaica versus Italy and nobody complained," Collina said. "We have to enforce the rules."

At the men's World Cup, FIFA claimed afterward that 99.3% of "match-changing" plays were called correctly. Collina presented figures that showed VAR was used 20 times in 64 matches in Russia, with 17 decisions overturned and three confirmed.

Seven penalties were awarded in Russia because of VAR. Two goals were given after being initially ruled offside, including one by South Korea that helped to eliminate world champion Germany.

FIFA opens disciplinary case vs. Cameroon

By ROB HARRIS
Associated Press

LE HAVRE, France — FIFA opened disciplinary proceedings Wednesday against Cameroon for players' conduct during the team's loss to England in the Women's World Cup.

The team protested VAR decisions in a 3-0 loss to England on Sunday, twice delaying kickoff as they complained. The players looked like they might refuse to continue playing.

The protests began when video reviews on offside decisions allowed Ellen White to send England to a 2-0 lead before halftime and then denied Cameroon the goal that would have brought them within one after the break. Ajara Nchout was sobbing on the sideline as she pleaded for her goal to stand.

FIFA told The Associated Press on Wednesday that its disciplinary committee opened a case against Cameroon over alleged breaches related to team misconduct, offensive behavior and fair play.

The stance of the disciplinary division is in strong contrast to the view of Fatma Samoura, who runs the FIFA administration as the governing body's secretary general.

Samoura tweeted that the Cameroon players "inspired many young girls," with "passionate and talented play on the field that made your fans proud and your country is proud of you."

But Ishu Johansen, president of CAF's women's committee, said the match "reflected badly not only on African women's football but African football on the whole." She wants punishment imposed.



MICHEL SPINGLER/AP

Cameroon's Ajara Nchout, left, and Cameroon head coach Alain Djumfa react after a VAR decision.

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

Scoreboard

Round of 16

Saturday, June 22
At Grenoble, France
 Germany 3, Nigeria 0
At Nice, France
 Norway 1, Australia 1, Norway wins 4-1 on penalty kicks

Sunday, June 23
At Valenciennes, France
 England 3, Cameroon 0
At Le Havre, France
 France 2, Brazil 1

Monday, June 24
At Reims, France
 United States 2, Spain 1
At Paris

Sweden 1, Canada 0
Tuesday, June 25
At Montpellier, France
 Italy 2, China 0
At Rennes, France

Netherlands 2, Japan 1
QUARTERFINALS
Thursday, June 27
At Le Havre, France
 Norway vs. England

Friday, June 28
At Paris
 France vs. United States, AFN-Sports, 9 p.m. Friday CET; 4 a.m. Saturday JKT

Saturday, June 29
At Valenciennes, France
 Italy vs. Netherlands, AFN-Sports, 3 p.m. Saturday CET; 10 p.m. Saturday JKT
At Rennes, France
 Germany vs. Sweden, AFN-Sports, 6:30 p.m. Saturday CET; 1:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

SEMIFINALS
Tuesday, July 2
At Lyon, France
 Le Havre winner vs. Paris winner
Wednesday, July 3
At Lyon, France
 Valenciennes winner vs. Rennes winner

THIRD PLACE
Saturday, July 6
At Nice, France
 Semifinal losers

CHAMPIONSHIP
Sunday, July 7
At Lyon, France
 Semifinal winners



CLAUDE PARIS/AP

Italy's Barbara Bonansea, center, Martina Rosucci, left, and Cristiana Girelli celebrate defeating China in the Women's World Cup round of 16 at Stade de la Mosson in Montpellier, France, on Tuesday. Italy won 2-0, advancing to the quarterfinals for the first time since the first FIFA women's showcase in 1991.

Europe dominating tournament

Record seven European teams advanced to World Cup quarterfinals

By ROB HARRIS
 Associated Press

LE HAVRE, France — Even Netherlands forward Lineth Beerensteyn had to check that the number was right.

"Oh my God — seven," she exclaimed. "That's a lot."

Europe sure is dominating this Women's World Cup.

The Netherlands made a record seven European teams in the quarterfinals by knocking out Japan, which won the tournament in 2011 and reached the final four years ago.

Never before in the previous seven editions had an Asian team missed out on making the last eight. Only the United States' victory over Spain prevented a clean sweep by European teams in the round of 16, and the defending champions now have to face host France on Friday.

"Sometimes it kind of feels like a Euros," Netherlands forward Vivianne Miedema said. "America is amazing."

The compliment isn't being returned by U.S. forward Tobin Heath.

"As a football fan, to me I would want a little bit more diversity at this point," Heath said. "I find European football is sometimes a little boring and I think that there's some teams that are so exciting to watch, that you won't be able to see this kind of different style, which is unfortunate at this stage because I appreciate certain teams that are no longer in the tournament."

There is a freshness to the field, however. The Dutch are in the quarterfinals for the first time in only their second appearance in the tournament. Italy, their opponent on Saturday, is back in the quarterfinals for the first time since the first FIFA women's showcase in 1991.

The round opened on Thursday with Norway playing England, which finished third in 2015, and wraps up Saturday night with two-time champion Germany taking on Sweden.

Investment domestically is raising standards for players, cementing Europe's control of the international game.

"The biggest example is Italy," Miedema said. "They put a lot of money into Juventus and in a couple of other clubs. You see it directly on the World Cup."

All but one of the Italian players plays at home, with eight out of 23 playing on the Serie A-winning

Juventus squad.

"Once the league in your country is really strong then you know your national team is going to become better as well," Miedema said. "It's only going to become bigger."

But a few clubs have emerged as forces in the women's game.

As many players on the Netherlands squad play for Ajax — four — as they do for newly crowned English champion Arsenal, including Miedema. While Arsenal was crowned European champion in 2007, Ajax has never conquered the continent.

The appearance of Norway in the World Cup quarterfinals signals a resurgence for the 1995 champions.

The Norwegians reached the semifinals in four of the first five editions of the Women's World Cup, but were eliminated in the group stage in 2011 and in the round of 16 in 2015.

"The investment and output and the value you get for money invested is high in women's football," said Nadine Kessler, the former world player of the year who is now head of women's football at European governing body UEFA. "It can pay off much quicker than in the men's game."

England, Germany and France were the only European teams in the quarterfinals four years ago before the U.S. beat Japan in the final.

"There are already four World Cup winners from three different confederations," said Kessler, a European champion with Germany in 2013. "The efforts over the past few years have allowed Europe to become generally better and more teams involved in the top level of the international game."

While clubs are realizing the benefits of injecting cash into women's operations, that can create disparities in Europe.

"Sweden has been a top league historically, but now we are seeing something changing and that's the big men's clubs coming in to invest," said Sweden goalkeeper Hedvig Lindahl, who has just left Roman Abramovich-owned Chelsea. "Sweden has to be creative to invest in that top level."

England goalkeeper Karen Bardsley, who grew up in California and now plays for Abu Dhabi-owned Manchester City, has seen the cash flowing into the European game make an impact at this World Cup.

"It's been crying out for exactly what has happened," Bardsley said in Le Havre, where England plays Norway. "It's clear to see the investment in the likes of England, Spain, France, Germany ... has paid off."

Showdown: Tournament favorites meet in quarterfinals

FROM BACK PAGE

While the players said the focus for the United States was always on one game at a time, Rapinoe voiced the underlying truth about the match in Paris on Friday: It was circled on everyone's World Cup calendar since December's draw.

'It's going to be totally awesome. This is what everybody wants.'

Megan Rapinoe, U.S. forward

The United States advanced with a physically challenging win over Spain in the round of 16, while France scored in extra time to get past resilient Brazil.

The top-ranked U.S. team breezed through its group stage at the World Cup, but Spain posed a challenge to the three-time champions in the Round of 16.

Players said the difficult match was crucial to the team's preparation going into the quarterfinal against the fourth-ranked French, the first time in a World Cup. The Americans could also face No. 3 England if they go through to the semifinals.

"I think this game was extremely important to us, looking forward to France," Alex Morgan said. "It was a very challenging game and it showed a little bit of what we might see in France."

France also got a tough test out of the way.

Les Bleues finished atop their group with three wins before surviving their knockout opener. Captain Amandine Henry redirected Amel Majri's free kick for a tiebreaking goal in the 107th minute of a 2-1 victory Sunday night in Le Havre.

Corinne Diacre was critical of her team, saying, "We weren't at our best."

The match Friday, while great for the sport, also means one of the favorites will be headed home on Saturday. A lopsided draw put three of the world's top teams on one side of the bracket, while No. 2 Germany tops the other.

U.S. coach Jill Ellis acknowledged the final-in-the-quarterfinals feel to Friday's match.

"I truly believe this is the world game for women, and so what a showcase piece. I'm sure a lot of people would like it later in the tournament, but it is what it is," Ellis said. "Myself and probably Corinne are both like, 'We've got good players, good teams and good setups, so let's go for it.'"

US forward Rapinoe stands by statement

PARIS — Megan Rapinoe apologized Thursday for using coarse language in saying she would not visit the White House if the United States wins the Women's World Cup.

She otherwise said she stands by her statement about not going, with the exception of the expletive.

Her comments at a previously scheduled news conference came a day after President Donald Trump called out the U.S. women's national team star on Twitter. Trump referenced a video that surfaced on Twitter in recent days, posting: "Megan should never disrespect our Country, the White House, or our Flag, especially since so much has been done for her and the team."

Trump said he would invite the U.S. team "win or lose."

Earlier in the week, Trump had also told The Hill that it wasn't appropriate for Rapinoe to protest during the national anthem.

Rapinoe's initial comments were made during an interview for a magazine in January in which she was asked if she was excited about the prospect of going to the White House. In a video excerpt of the interview posted Tuesday, she can be seen using a profanity when she says she's not going. She also expressed doubts the team would be invited.

Rapinoe, who is gay, has also frequently spoken out about politics and has criticized the Trump administration and its policies in the past.

— Associated Press

SPORTS



National champions
Vanderbilt pounds Michigan
for second title » **CWS, Page 61**

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

IT'S ON

United States set for quarterfinal
showdown with host France

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

It wasn't just fans who were looking forward to a quarterfinal clash between France and the defending champion United States at the Women's World Cup. Megan Rapinoe clearly was, too.

"I hope it's huge and crazy. That's what it should be," Rapinoe said just after the match was set. "This is the best game, this is what everybody wanted. I think we wanted it, seems like they're up for it, you guys are, of course, up for it, and all the fans."

SEE SHOWDOWN ON PAGE 63



The United States' Megan Rapinoe, left, and France's Amandine Henry, right, will face off when the teams meet in Friday's World Cup quarterfinal.

AP photos

Trump: Service academy athletes can go pro » Page 60

